Rapid Recovery Plan

2021

Brockton, MA

dhcd Massachusetts

RAPID RECOVERY PLANS

This plan has been made possible through technical assistance provided by the Baker-Polito Administration's Local Rapid Recovery Planning program.

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RAPID RECOVERY PLANS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Local Rapid Recovery Planning (RRP) program is a key part of the Baker-Polito Administration's Partnerships for Recovery Plan, the strategy established to help communities stabilize and grow the Massachusetts economy as a result of the economic impacts brought on by COVID-19. The plan invests $774 million in efforts to get people back to work, support small businesses, foster innovation, revitalize downtowns, and keep people in stable housing.

In addition to the planning program, recovery efforts include a Small Business Relief Program administered by the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation. This program, which concluded in May 2021, provided more than $687.2 million to over 15,000 businesses across the Commonwealth, with a focus on businesses located in Gateway Cities, among demographic priorities, or operating in sectors most impacted by the pandemic. Cities, towns, and non-profit entities are using Regional Pilot Project Grant Program funding for recovery solutions that seek to activate vacant storefronts, support regional supply chain resiliency, and create small business support networks. To promote recovery in the tourism industry and support the ongoing My Local MA marketing initiative encouraging residents to support their local economies by shopping, dining and staying local, another $1.6 million in grants were awarded through the new Travel and Tourism Recovery Grant Pilot Program. Through April 2021, MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program has invested $26.4 million in municipal Shared Streets projects to support public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce.

In support of the overall recovery strategy, the Administration made $9.5 million in awards for 125 communities to create Local Rapid Recovery Plans, through the MA Downtown Initiative Program. These plans address the impacts of COVID-19 on local downtowns and small businesses by partnering with Plan Facilitators and Subject Matter Experts to pursue locally-driven, actionable strategies.

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Brockton, MA

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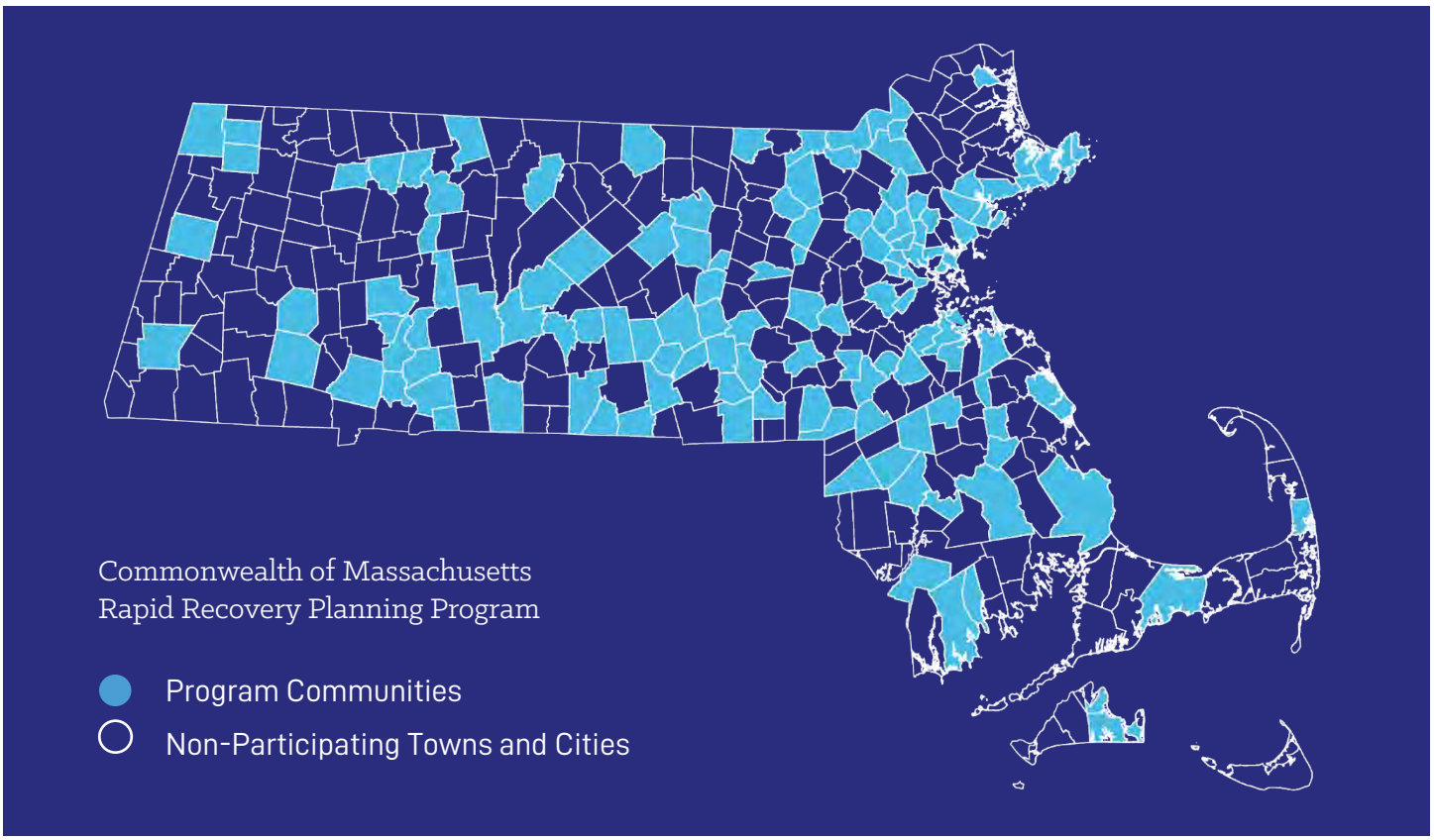
125 communities participated in the Rapid Recovery Plan Program

52 Small Communities
51 Medium Communities
16 Large Communities
6 Extra Large Communities

Mass Downtown Initiative distributed nearly $10 million across 125 communities throughout the Commonwealth to assess impacts from COVID-19 and develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges in downtowns, town centers, and commercial districts.



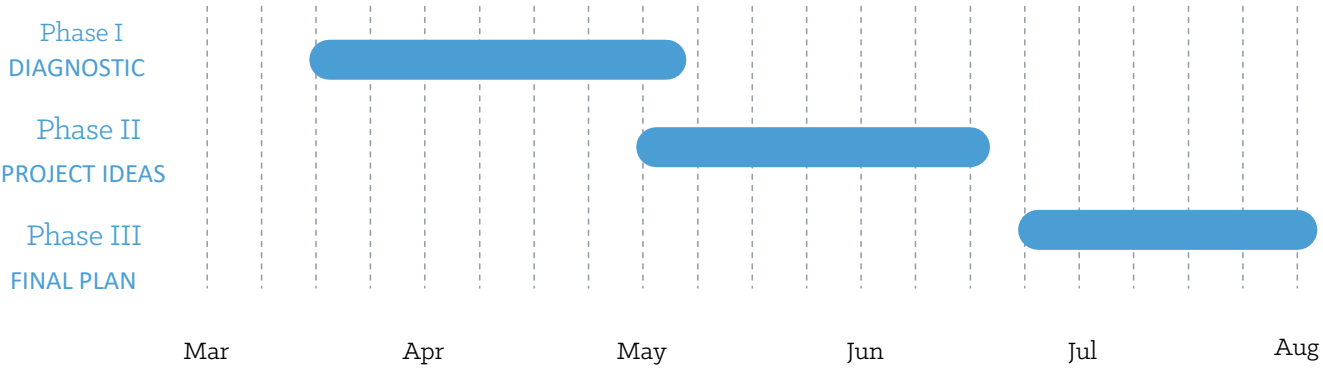
Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program

The Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program is intended to provide every municipality in Massachusetts the opportunity to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges and COVID-19 related impacts to downtowns, town centers, and commercial areas across the commonwealth.

The program provided technical assistance through Plan Facilitators assigned to each community applicant (e.g., city, town, or nonprofit entity) and Subject Matter Experts who supported the development of ideas for project recommendations and shared knowledge through best practice webinars and individual consultations.

Communities and Plan Facilitators were partnered through the program to assess COVID-19 impacts, convene community partners to solicit project ideas and provide feedback, and develop project recommendations. The following plan summarizes key findings from the diagnostic phase of the program and includes a range of priority project recommendations for the community.

Each Rapid Recovery Plan was developed across three phases between February-August 2021. Phase 1 - Diagnostic, Phase 2- Project Recommendations, Phase 3 - Plan.



In Phase 1: Diagnostic, Plan Facilitators utilized the Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework that was adapted from the award-winning Commercial DNA approach as published by the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) in "Preparing a Commercial District Diagnostic", and authored by Larisa Ortiz, Managing Director, Streetsense (RRP Program Advisor).

The framework was designed to ensure methodical diagnosis of challenges and opportunities in each community, and to identify strategies and projects that aligned with the interests and priorities of each community. The framework looks at four areas of analysis: Physical Environment, Business Environment, Market Information, and Administrative Capacity - each equipped with guiding questions to direct research conducted by Plan Facilitators.

Rapid Recovery Plan Diagnostic Framework

Who are the customers of businesses in the Study Area?

How conducive is the physical environment to meeting the needs and expectations of both businesses and customers?

What are the impacts of COVID-19 on businesses in the Study Area? How well does the business mix meet the needs of various customer groups?

Who are the key stewards of the Study Area? Are they adequately staffed and resourced to support implementation of projects? Are the regulatory, zoning, and permitting processes an impediment to business activity?

Following the diagnostic in Phase 1, Plan Facilitators, in close coordination with communities, developed and refined a set of recommendations that address priority challenges and opportunities. These project recommendations are organized in clear and concise rubrics created specially for the Rapid Recovery Plan Program. Project recommendations are rooted in a set of essential and comprehensive improvements across six categories: Public Realm, Private Realm, Revenue and Sales, Administrative Capacity, Tenant Mix, Cultural/Arts & Others.

Public Realm | Private Realm | Tenant Mix | Revenue/Sales | Admin Capacity | Cultural/Arts | Other

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

A Downtown Poised to Emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic Stronger than Before

The City of Brockton is a densely developed, diverse Gateway City located 25 miles south of Boston, with a population of 105,643.[1] A city with a rich history, Brockton today is home to a population that is younger and more diverse than the Commonwealth overall. It has a median age of 37 with one-third of the population under age 25. The city is 40% Black/African American, 36% white, and 13% Hispanic with the top languages spoken being English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Cape Verdean Creole.[2]

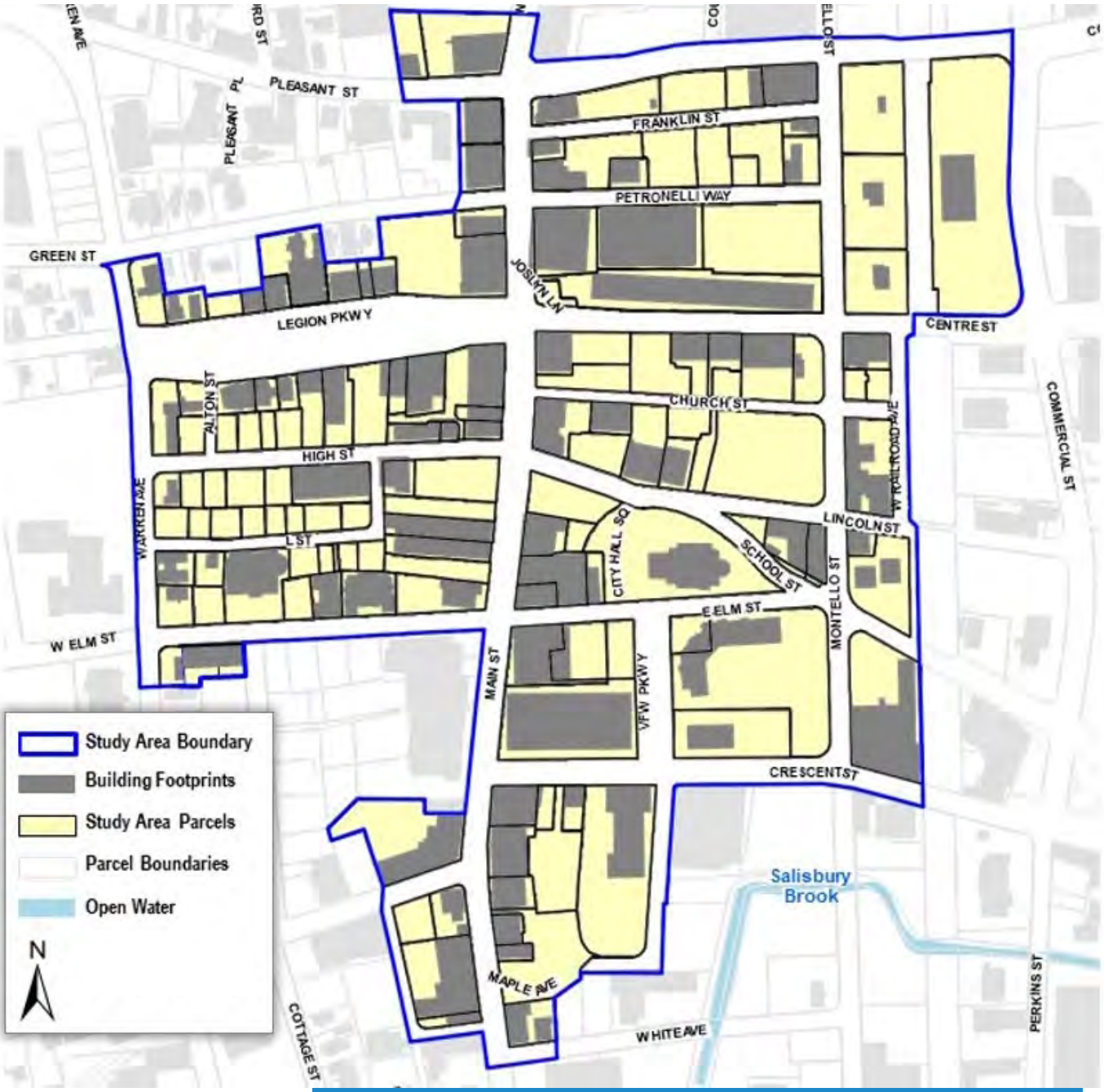
The City of Brockton chose to focus their Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) efforts on the heart of their downtown, which is home to WB Mason's world headquarters and an MBTA commuter rail station that provides access to downtown Boston in under 35 minutes. Downtown Brockton is currently in a state of physical transformation and has long been the focus of intensive efforts by city leaders to stimulate private investment through redevelopment efforts. Despite the recent influx of state, federal, and private investment in real estate projects, focused efforts are still needed to address persistent challenges for the downtown that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The RRP study area extends from Pleasant Street in the north down Main Street to White Avenue, and is roughly bounded by Warren Avenue to the west and Montello Street and Commercial Street to the east (see study area map on the following page). The study area is home to approximately 500 residents, though more live in the immediate surrounding area and there has been recent high demand for residential space in downtown, with hundreds of residential units planned or in development across various sites.

While there are a mix of businesses, many downtown stakeholders comment that the right mix of amenities does not yet exist to foster a truly livable downtown and establish it as a destination that attracts visitors and customers. Sidewalks, roadbeds, and crosswalks are generally in fair to good condition; however, many downtown stakeholders expressed that improvements in cleanliness, aesthetics, and green space (e.g., façade improvements, trash maintenance, landscaping, open space amenities, etc.) are necessary to create a more attractive and inviting downtown. The downtown is also home to the Massachusetts Office of Transitional Assistance, the Brockton Neighborhood Health Center, and many social service providers, which result in a concentration of people who are unhoused, have substance use disorders, or need other support.

The thirteen (13) priority project recommendations included in this Plan emerged from the diagnostic phase of the RRP process, which identified the physical environment – in both the public and private realms – and the administrative capacity of the City and other downtown stakeholders as key challenges and opportunities for downtown Brockton. For example, there are many vacant commercial buildings that have not been maintained and have fallen into disrepair. Based on site visits conducted during spring 2021, 22% of storefronts within the study area are vacant, and building façades received a grade of "C" – meaning that more than 25% of the properties require significant building façade improvements. The reasons behind this are myriad and complicated, and recommendations such as enforcing and incentivizing the maintenance of vacant and neglected commercial buildings and the implementation of physical improvements to the public realm are intended to help address the underlying issues.

[1] Source: 2020 Decennial Census
[2] Source: : ESRI Demographic Indicators, 2020



Downtown Brockton Study Area Map. Source: BSC Group

The Brockton RRP Study Area encompasses approximately 0.1 square miles in the historic downtown

Downtown Brockton's recovery will depend on a mix of public and private realm improvements and building the strength, resources, and capacity of downtown stakeholders

The thirteen projects developed through the RRP process are intended to improve the downtown experience for residents, businesses, and visitors in order to draw more people into the downtown and support Brockton's equitable recovery from the impacts of the pandemic:

Recommendation	Project Category
Expand City Hall Plaza	Public Realm
Pilot the Downtown Ambassadors Program	Public Realm
Implement Safety, Accessibility & Multimodal Complete Streets Improvements	Public Realm
Further Conceptual Wayfinding Plan and Signage Program	Public Realm
Enforce and Incentivize Maintenance of Vacant and Neglected Commercial Buildings	Private Realm
Assist Businesses with Establishing an Online Presence	Revenue/Sales
Develop and Implement Program Management Plan for Sycamore Grove	Administrative Capacity
Increase City Planning Staff Capacity to Perform Planning and Economic Development Functions	Administrative Capacity
Foster an Equitable Small Business Technical Assistance Network	Administrative Capacity
Establish a District Management Entity	Administrative Capacity
Engage Property Owners and Attract Diverse Businesses Downtown to Promote Active Ground Floor Uses	Tenant Mix
Create a Publicly Accessible Art Plan and Policy	Cultural/Arts
Conduct a Performing Arts and Cultural Facility Feasibility Study	Cultural/Arts

Downtown Brocton in October 2020. Source: iStock.com/DenisTangneyJr

Diagnostic

Key Findings

Brockton is young and diverse with a growing downtown

Brockton is Massachusetts' 6th largest city and home to 105,643 residents. The city generally has lower household income levels and a lower educational attainment than state averages. Median household income in the city is $55,755, 31% less than the Commonwealth overall. In the Downtown study area, median household income is $12,169. Approximately 20% of residents age 25+ have earned a bachelors degree or higher, which is less than half the statewide average. Brockton is also younger and more diverse than the Commonwealth overall. It has a median age of 37 with one-third of the population is under age 25 and 15% aged 65 years or older. The city is 40% Black/African American, 36% white, and 13% Hispanic with the top languages spoken being English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Cape Verdean Creole.*

While less than 500 people currently live within the boundaries of the study area, there has been recent high demand for residential space in downtown and hundreds of residential units are planned or in development across various sites. Getting more people downtown – including residents, visitors, and employees – is critical to the success of brick and mortar establishments. Pre-COVID, the small businesses in downtown Brockton relied heavily on nearby employers such as WB Mason and the District Court to generate their customer base. With the advent of COVID-19, many downtown employers moved to a remote workplace and there are very few employees remaining downtown during and after working hours to frequent local restaurants or other small businesses.

Downtown Brockton is in the midst of transformation

The Downtown Brockton Study Area extends from Pleasant Street in the north down Main Street to White Avenue. Average daily traffic on Main Street was 10,062 vehicles per day in 2018 (MassDOT TDMS), and during the COVID-19 state of emergency in 2021, average daily traffic fell by approximately 1,000 vehicles per day.

Downtown is currently in a state of redevelopment, and has long been the focus of intensive efforts by city leaders to stimulate private investment through redevelopment efforts. There are a handful of opens spaces and plazas within and adjacent to the study area. Most notably, the City has been creating a public entertainment and gathering space in Sycamore Grove, the site of a former bus terminal within the study area. City Hall Plaza is also home to a weekly farmers market and other city-sponsored events in the warmer months.

The current condition of downtown's public and private realms varies. When surveyed, business owners in the area were generally dissatisfied with the condition of public spaces, private buildings, and safety and comfort for employees. Overall sidewalks, roadbeds, and crosswalks are adequate, though certainly favor vehicles over pedestrians. Parts of the district are lacking streetscape amenities that contribute to overall comfort and safety for downtown residents, visitors, and businesses. While some privately-owned buildings have been renovated and have attractive features, such as a mural painted on W.B. Mason's headquarters, many are in need of improvements. In recent field visits, business signage and storefront lighting was assessed to be adequate; however, signage for businesses on upper floors in particular was lacking and it was difficult to discern whether upper floors were occupied at all. Outdoor dining and retail was nearly non-existent in downtown despite being allowed by-right in May 2020, and this was rated by businesses as a top priority for attraction of customers and businesses.

Source: 2020 Decennial Census & ESRI Demographic Indicators, 2020

A more robust set of attractions is needed to bolster small businesses

Brockton's downtown has been affected by several decades of decline and was further impacted by COVID-19. There are 136 storefronts in the district, including restaurants, retail, services, banks, and offices, and as of spring 2021, 30 of these storefronts (22%) were vacant – though it is worth noting that many of these have sat vacant since long before the COVID-19 pandemic. In a survey of downtown businesses conducted in 2021, 57% of businesses reported generating less revenue in 2020 compared to 2019. In addition to a decline in revenue, nearly one-third experienced employee layoffs, reduced operating hours/capacity, and incurred expenses to implement safety measures.

As of May 2021, there were 130 businesses operating in the downtown, including anchor institutions such as the Brockton Neighborhood Health Center and Irving's Home Center/TrueValue. There is no single dominant business type in the downtown. Services such as salons and personal care represent the highest proportion of businesses at 18% followed by retail trade (16%), professional, scientific, and technical services (15%), accommodation and food service (12%), and health care and social assistance (9%). Prior to COVID-19, demand for downtown office space had been declining for several years leaving many upper floor commercial spaces vacant. Stakeholders report that residents often request more dining options in the downtown.

One of the core challenges for the city is providing a robust set of attractions to generate interest in downtown and bring people to the downtown core to support small businesses. Another challenge relates to concerns about safety and crime, which create a challenging business environment. Addressing these concerns is a critical element of improving the public realm.

Despite the negative impacts of the pandemic, downtown Brockton is at an inflection point. Years of hard work by city and state officials are beginning to bear fruit, with the pending opening of a brewery and restaurant in the new Sycamore on Main development marking a milestone in the city's long-term recovery. Through focused efforts, a critical mass of businesses that meet the needs of the residential population as well as other customers and visitors to the downtown can be reached to help foster and sustain a vibrant downtown commercial district.

There is no single organization overseeing downtown recovery efforts

While the City of Brockton has spearheaded efforts to revitalize the downtown, City resources have been stretched thin during COVID-19 and it would benefit the downtown to have a privately-resourced entity to prioritize and manage issues specific to it. Currently, there is no single organization dedicated to overseeing downtown recovery efforts. As one of the main stewards of downtown Brockton, the staffing and resources available to the City of Brockton will also be a key consideration for implementation of RRP projects.

Through the RRP process, Brockton stakeholders have identified improvements in safety and cleanliness, as well as streetscapes and building facades, among their top strategies to help the downtown recover from and thrive after COVID. The City of Brockton was resource-challenged to manage downtown core activities prior to the pandemic, but the public health crisis has exacerbated operational and capital funding needs throughout the city. A district management entity is needed to provide sustained resources that are required for maintenance of public spaces and enhanced public safety.

The Downtown Brockton Association (DBA) is an important stakeholder to consider for district management. The DBA has recently been reinvigorated with the arrival of a new, interim president. DBA is poised to serve as a key champion for downtown recovery efforts – as long as it is receives the support needed to serve in this role, which requires a combination of leadership, organizational capacity, and resources.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Highlights from the Physical Environment

TRANSIT-ORIENTED REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENTS ARE SETTING THE STAGE FOR A STRONG COMEBACK

Downtown Brockton is rich in historic structures with a strong and intact urban block structure, and positive changes have been taking place over the last several years (see "Downtown Brockton Investments" map on the following page). In fact, since 2014, over 400 housing units have been built or are currently under construction. The first phase of the Enterprise Block redevelopment project by Trinity Financial, completed in 2015, recreated a significant downtown block within walking distance of the commuter rail station while also heralding an influx of public and private investment. These real estate developments are helping create the foot traffic that is needed downtown.

Despite the recent influx of investments, focused efforts are still needed to address persistent challenges for the downtown related to both the public and private realm. Some of the needs identified during the diagnostic phase of the RRP process include revitalizing building facades and storefronts to create a more welcoming streetscape and more open spaces and destinations for residents and people traveling through the downtown area. The area around City Hall Plaza, for example, holds a lot of potential for hosting expanded programming and drawing people into the area for small and large gatherings. COVID-19 has further highlighted the need for adequate and equal access to high quality open spaces.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The City of Brockton has made numerous improvements to the public realm in recent years, including upgrades to Main Street, Centre Street and Lincoln/School Street within the study area. Main Street, in front of Brockton District Court, was updated with a bike lane, new streetlights, benches, and trees and may serve as model for future streescape improvements.

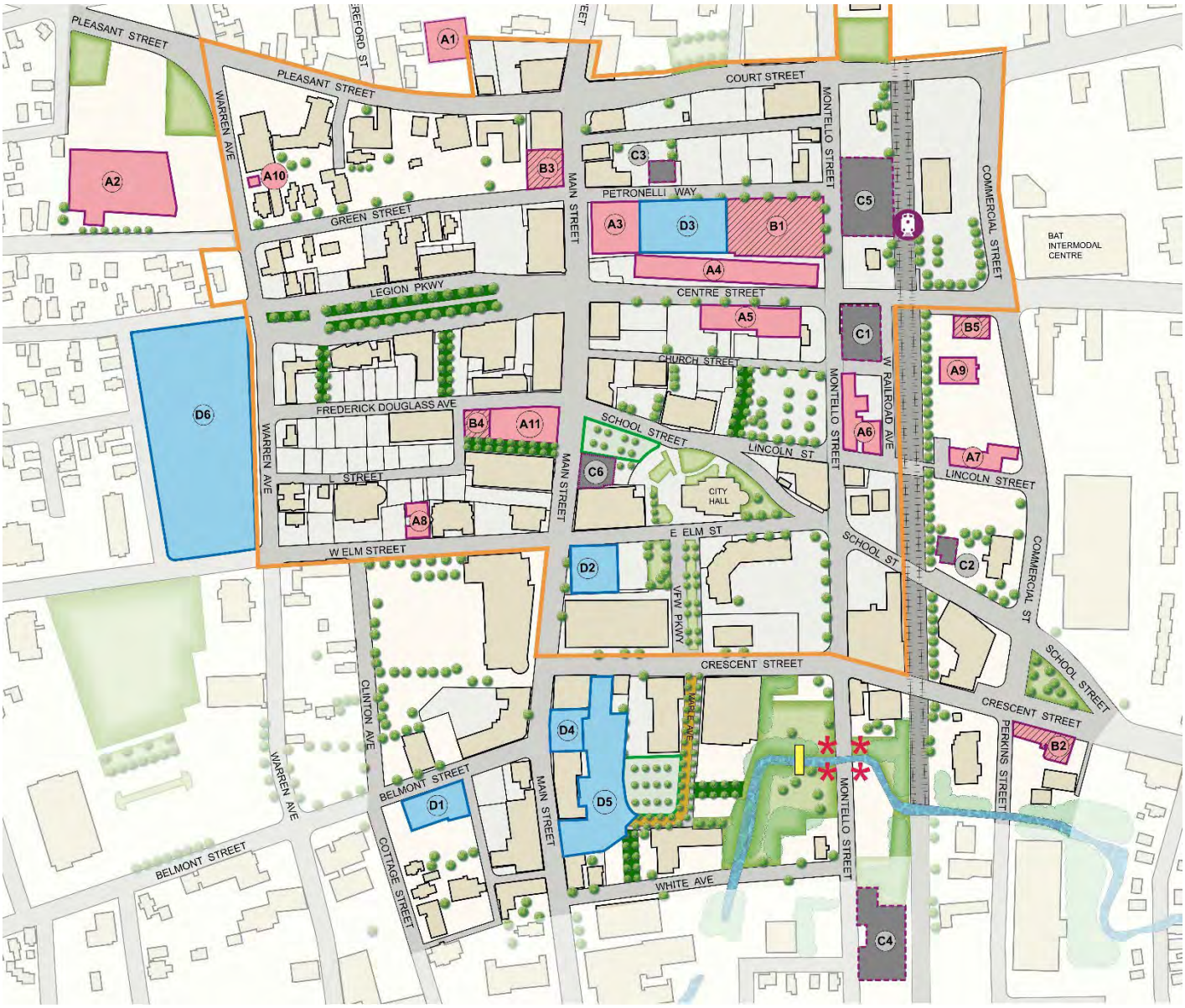
As the City embarks on roadway and streetscape improvements as part of its COVID economic recovery, attention should be paid to incorporating a large-scale art infrastructure component as well as inclusive planning and engagement. Planned utility and streetscape upgrades also provide an important opportunity to support placemaking in the downtown that will encourage activity and pedestrian traffic.

Legion Parkway is a main commercial thoroughfare in downtown Brockton. While there are a number of businesses here, including a dry cleaner. a beauty supply store, a discount retailer, and a bank, there are also numerous vacant storefronts, and signage for offices and other businesses on upper floors in particular was lacking. Legion Parkway provides an opportunity for focused efforts to improve both the public and private realms.

Photo of Commercial buildings along Legion Parkway: BSC Group

PROVA! operates an annual pop-up garden celebrating Brockton's heritage with craft beer, local food, family fun, arts, and entertainment. In summer 2021, PROVA! located their pop-up at Sycamore Grove. The site was chosen given that the City of Brockton is re-imagining the former bus terminal as a downtown green space, lined with patios for al fresco dining. PROVA! demonstrated how the space can be successfully activated with the pop-up, and that the community will come and utilize it.

Source: PROVA! Brockton



A. COMPLETED PRIVATE INVESTMENT PROJECTS

- A1. **STANDARD MODERN** - 24 UNITS
- A2. **VICENTE'S SUPERMARKET** - 32,000 SF COMMERCIAL
- A3. **ENTERPRISE MAIN** - 62,076 SF COMMERCIAL
- A4. **CENTRE 50 / ENSO FLATS** - 113 UNITS
- A5. **WB MASON** - OFFICE
- A6. **STATION LOFTS** - 24 UNITS
- A7. **BROPHY & PHILLIPS CO.** - OFFICE
- A8. **XLVII WEST ELM APARTMENTS** – 44 UNITS
- A9. **COMMERCIAL STATION** - 24 UNITS
- A10. **FATHER BILL'S & MAIN SPRING** - 6 UNITS
- A11. **SYCAMORE ON MAIN** - 48 UNITS & 2,500 SF COMMERCIAL

B. UNDERWAY PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- B1. **ENTERPRISE CENTER PHASE 2** - 100 UNITS
- B2. **155 CRESCENT STREET**
- B3. **19 MAIN STREET** - 20 UNITS & 2,636 SF COMMERCIAL
- B4. **36 FREDERICK DOUGLASS**
- B5. **127 CENTRE** - 40 UNITS & 3,500 SF COMMERCIAL

C. PROPOSED PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- C1. **93 CENTRE** - 53 UNITS & 6,012 SF COMMERCIAL
- C2. **140 SCHOOL STREET** - RESIDENTIAL
- C3. **28 PETRONELLI WAY** - 18 UNITS & 561 SF COMMERCIAL
- C4. **CORCORAN MIXED USE** - MIXED-USE
- C5. **46 MONTELLO** - 64 UNITS
- C6. **KENNEDY BLOCK DEVELOPMENT** - COMMERCIAL

D. PUBLIC INVESTMENT PROJECTS (COMPLETED / UNDERWAY / PLANNED)

- D1. **REGISTRY OF DEEDS**
- D2. **DA OFFICE**
- D3. **MAYOR BILL CARPENTER GARAGE**
- D4. **MA UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE**
- D5. **SYCAMORE GROVE**
- D6. **PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX**

EXISTING BUILDING
MBTA STATION
URBAN RENEWAL BOUNDARY
PROPOSED GREEN LINKS
PROPOSED GREEN LINKS AT STREETSCAPE
PROPOSED PARKING LOT/ PLAZA GREENING
PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
PROPOSED GATEWAY ELEMENTS

Downtown Brockton Investments. Map Source: BSC Group

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Highlights from the Business Environment

FILLING STOREFRONT VACANCIES

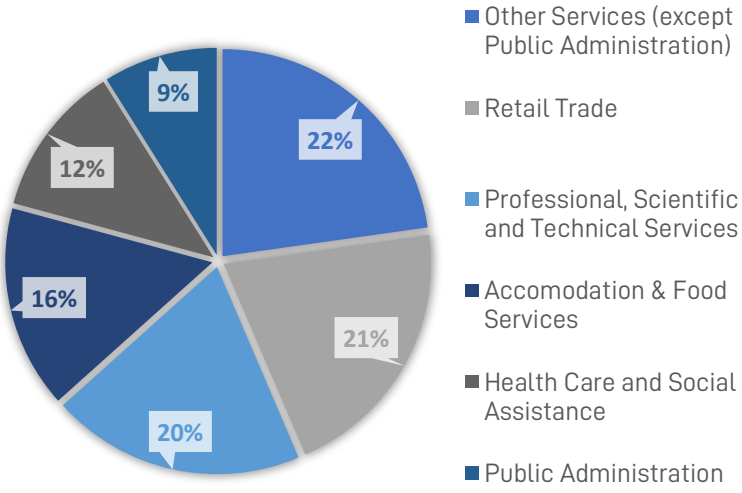
With nearly a quarter of storefronts vacant in spring 2021, downtown vacancies are a noticeable feature in Brockton. There is no single reason for downtown vacancies, though stakeholders note that many vacant commercial buildings must be brought up to code in order to be rented. That might mean five or six figures in behind-the-scenes work like ventilation, sprinklers, and elevators before even getting to the buildout costs the tenants might want, like facade improvements. These costs are often prohibitive to occupancy in all but the most lucrative markets.

While there are a mix of businesses, many downtown stakeholders comment that the right mix of amenities does not yet exist to foster a truly livable downtown and establish it as a destination that attracts visitors and customers. The City has found it challenging to attract a more diverse mix of businesses to downtown. The City is adding hundreds of new housing units in mixed-use buildings within the downtown core, which is slowly building the local market, yet it has been difficult to attract first floor commercial tenants to those buildings. In order for the City to realize a thriving downtown, the area needs to offer retail, entertainment and restaurant amenities to current and future residents and employees of downtown businesses. The City struggled to attract commercial tenants to downtown prior to COVID, but the new economic pressure of COVID renders it nearly impossible to secure new tenant agreements.

CONCERNS ABOUT SAFETY CREATE A CHALLENGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Based on responses to the 2021 RRP business survey, a majority (71%) of businesses are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the safety and comfort of customers and employees in the study area. Many stakeholders expressed that improvements in cleanliness, aesthetics, and green space are necessary to create a more attractive and inviting downtown. The downtown is also home to many social service providers, which result in a concentration of people who are unhoused, have substance use disorders, or need other support.

Downtown Business Mix



Mix of businesses in Downtown Brockton by NAICS category. Source: Field Data Collection, April 2021

For Lease Signage at Enterprise Main in Downtown Brockton. Source: BSC Group

ADMIN CAPACITY

Highlights from Admin Capacity

City	Department Title	Functions	Staffing Levels (2018)
Brockton	Planning & Economic Development	Zoning, economic development, fair housing, conservation, land use, transportation, open space planning	4
Lawrence	Office of Planning, Zoning & Development	Land use, community development, historic preservation, open space, business and economic development	22
Lowell	Planning & Development	Community development, development services (inspectional/permitting), economic development, housing and energy, traffic and transportation and planning projects, lead abatement	25
New Bedford	Planning, Housing & Community Development	Land use, housing, community development, preservation	19 (7 in planning)
Newton	Planning & Development	Land use, housing, economic development, community development, preservation, environment	30
Quincy	Planning & Community Development	Housing, relocation, urban renewal, rehabilitation, community development	19
Salem	Planning & Community Development	Economic development, land use, housing policy, transportation projects, historic preservation, open space conservation programs, and neighborhood improvement efforts	14

Comparison of Planning Departments in Small MA Cities. Source: Metropolitan Area Planning Council, 2018.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY LIMITATIONS

The City of Brockton's Department of Planning & Economic Development (DPED) is currently comprised of three full-time planners, the Director of Planning and Economic Development, Senior Planner/Conservation Agent, and Administrative Assistant. Additionally, the City is seeking to fill two additional slots (Assistant Planner and a Senior Economic Development Planner).

Based on a review of staffing levels of planning departments in Massachusetts conducted by MAPC in 2018, Brockton's planning department is understaffed – particularly for a city of nearly 100,000. As shown in the summary table above, comparable small MA cities have significantly larger planning departments when compared to Brockton, ranging from 14 – 30 staff positions versus four (one of which is an administrative assistant) in Brockton. As a result, the functions of those planning departments are much broader than what Brockton can achieve with the four positions.

The significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on how municipalities operate, their local sources of revenue, and the provision of critical services to residents, coupled with the role of planners on the front lines of response and recovery, serve to further constrain Brockton's capacity to continue performing high-quality planning and redevelopment functions. As one of the main stewards of downtown Brockton, the staffing and resources available to DPED will be a key consideration for implementation of RRP projects.

Relatedly, it will be important to leverage and build the capacity of other entities focused on downtown Brockton. The Downtown Brockton Association (DBA) has recently been reinvigorated with the arrival of a new, interim president that is focused on rebuilding the organization. As an umbrella for downtown businesses, professionals, non-profits, organizations, government agencies, and others, the DBA is poised to be a key leader in collaborative efforts to ensure the continuation of the economic growth, development, and quality of life for all in downtown Brockton.

Project Recommendations

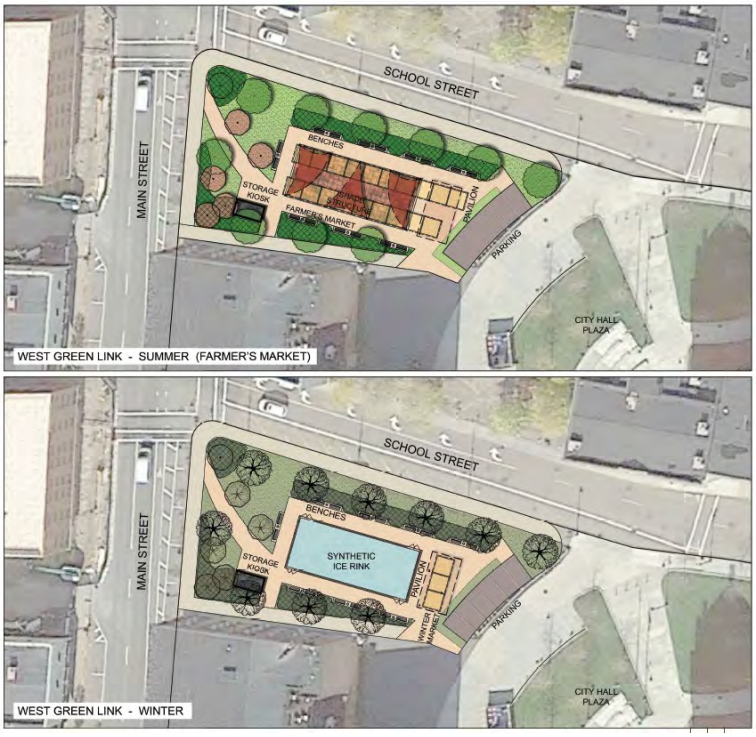
Expand City Hall Plaza

Category	Public Realm
Location	Private Parking Lot at Corner of Main and School Street | Census Tract 5109
Origin	City of Brockton staff and WalkBoston Audit Findings
Budget	High Budget ($200,000+) - Design ($100,000-$120,000) and Construction ($800,000-$1,200,000) *Does not include costs related to the acquisition of the privately-owned parcel (2020 Assessed Value: $169,000)*
Timeframe	Short Term (<5 years) *See Process Section for a breakdown of phasing.*
Risk	Low Risk – while funding will be needed, it is generally acknowledged that there is a need for high quality, usable open space in Downtown
Key Performance Indicators	Construction of an expanded City Hall Plaza; Number of visitors downtown; Number of farmers market patrons; Number of ice rink users
Partners & Resources	City of Brockton (Department of Planning and Economic Development and Parks Department) and MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Potential Sources of Funding: ARPA funding; PARC Grant; Gateway City Parks Program Grant; Community Development Block Grant; Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant; DIF funding; and local funding sources *Note about LWCF funding: LWCF reimburses 50% up to $750,000. In certain instances, LWCF will fund up to $1 million for climate change resilience related projects, e.g., addressing an urban heat island or to support an area that has been mapped as providing significant climate resiliency. Splash pads are viewed as climate resiliency projects.*

Model of Conceptual Plan for the Expansion of Brockton City Hall Plaza. Source: BSC Group

Diagnostic

In many previous planning initiatives, community members identified parks and open spaces as a top priority for land use improvements within downtown Brockton. This need was reflected in Phase I LRRP diagnostics and the recent WalkBoston audit, which identified a need and desire for more open spaces and destinations to rest and spend time for people traveling through the downtown area on foot. Parks and open spaces have public health, preservation and conservation implications — from providing places for physical activity and offering safe spaces for children to play, to helping to lower crime rates; their aesthetic value is also a source of civic pride. The area around City Hall Plaza holds a lot of potential for hosting expanded programming and drawing people into the area for small and large gatherings. COVID-19 has further highlighted the need for adequate and equal access to high quality open spaces. Expanding City Hall Plaza and adding amenities will provide high quality, usable open space and draw people into the downtown.



Summer and winter concept plans for an expanded City Hall Plaza. Source: BSC Group.

Action Items

Design and construct an expanded City Hall Plaza with amenities such as a synthetic ice rink, storage kiosk, pavilion structure, shade structure, splash pad feature, benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks.

Program the expanded City Hall Plaza with year-round activities including the longstanding farmers' market as well as other events to draw visitors into the downtown. Public spaces like an expanded City Hall Plaza need to be programmed if they are to be successful in creating a destination for downtown visitors and residents, which requires dedicated City staff or contractor to oversee and manage said programming.

Potential uses and activities for the expanded City Hall Plaza. Source: BSC Group.

Process

Pre-Design

- Identify and secure funding source(s).
- Complete an appraisal of the privately-owned parcel (parcel ID: 110-041).
- Complete a full ALTA survey preceding the beginning of the design process.
- Acquire the 14,555 SF private parking lot at Main and School Streets to expand City Hall Plaza.
- Relocate private parking into Adams Garage.
- Procure Landscape Architectural and Engineering services to design the expanded City Hall Plaza improvements.

Design And Construction

1. **Concept Plan Phase / Community Input**
   The City provides the community with an opportunity to give input into the design of the expanded City Hall Plaza. City staff works closely with the Mayor's Office throughout the outreach process. Outreach is done through community workshops dedicated to the conceptual planning of the expanded City Hall Plaza. After the community workshops, a Concept Plan is presented to the community, then finalized and presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).
   Timeline: 4-6 months

2. **Construction Documents**
   Once the concept plan has been approved, the selected Landscape Architect prepares Construction Documents. City staff reviews the documents periodically for compliance with the Concept Plan and for technical completeness.
   Timeline: 6-8 months

3. **Building Department Plan Review/Building Permit**
   Once the construction documents have been finalized, the plans are submitted to the Building Department for review by various City departments, and the plans are revised and a Building permit is issued to construct the project.
   Timeline: 2 months

4. **Bidding**
   Once the construction and environmental documents have been approved by City staff, the project is bid through the City's competitive bid process. Licensed contractors bid on the project.
   Timeline: 2 months

5. **Award of Construction Contract**
   Once the project bids are accepted, the City will award a Construction Contract to the lowest responsive bidder.
   Timeline: 2 months

6. **Construction**
   Construction of the project begins following the Notice to Proceed.
   Timeline: 6-12 months

Conceptual plan with a splash pad feature for the expanded City Hall Plaza. Source: BSC Group.

Best Practice

Worcester Common Oval

PUBLIC REALM

Location Worcester, MA

Public-private partnership enables year-round events and programming

The Worcester Common Oval features a public ice-skating rink in the winter and a seating/performance area in the summer, hosting an array of annual summer events such as Movies on the Common and Out to Lunch Concert Series. The 12,000-square-foot rink, which is 4,000 square feet larger than the size of the Rink at Rockefeller Center, is complete with amenities, such as piped-in music, skate rentals, concessions, holiday lights, and more, making it a fun and affordable family-friendly activity.

Event Management and Programming: Events held at the Worcester Common Oval are managed by the City of Worcester in conjunction with the Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC), a public-private partnership between the City of Worcester and over 70 cultural organizations. The WCC's mission is to draw on Worcester's rich and diverse cultural assets to foster economic revitalization, support active, creative engagement for all and promote a strong cultural identity for Greater Worcester. The WCC is partially staffed by City of Worcester employees within the Cultural Development Division.

In FY21, the Worcester Cultural Coalition was funded in part by: the Jean McDonough Foundation, the Barr Foundation, the City of Worcester, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the George I. Alden Trust, the Hermann Foundation, the Stoddard Foundation, the Pell Family Foundation, WCC membership, and revenue from the JMAC.

To learn more about the WCC, visit https://worcesterculture.org/about-wcc/.

Rink Management: The ice skating rink, located directly behind Worcester City Hall, is professionally managed by SMG, the DCU Center's management team.

Pilot the Downtown Ambassadors Program

Category	Public Realm
Location	Downtown Brockton study area | Census Tract 5109
Origin	City of Brockton staff and stakeholder engagement
Budget	Medium Budget ($50,000 - $200,000)
Timeframe	Short-Term (< 5 years)
Risk	Low Risk – As a pilot project, risk is inherently low. Successful implementation, being able to demonstrate value from the pilot, and cultivating sustainable program funding and sponsors/partners will be critical to long-term success.
Key Performance Indicators	Program consistently staffed during operating hours; Impact on "Clean, Green, and Safe" environment (qauntity of trash removed, graffiti removed, landscaping completed, visitor assistance/escorts provided, social service referrals made); Business/public feedback on perception of downtown before/during/after pilot
Partners & Resources	City of Brockton, Brockton Police Department, Brockton DPW, Brockton Redevelopment Authority, Old Colony Planning Council Funding Sources: ARPA funding; Marijuana Host Community Impact payments; and Community Development Block Grant funding

Set up a 'Clean, Green, and Safe Ambassadors' program.
These ambassadors will create additional "eyes on the streets," discourage inappropriate behavior, remove litter, and maintain planters
and/or hanging flower baskets. Proven in other cities, this is an effective and relatively affordable way to dramatically improve the perception of safety downtown. The Ambassadors program should get underway by summer 2016.

Vision for the Brockton Clean, Green, and Safe Ambassadors' program. Source: Brockton Downtown Action Strategy (2015).

Diagnostic

Well-maintained and inviting physical environments support economic vitality in downtowns. Field assessments for this Rapid Recovery Plan resulted in scores of "C" (out of A, B, C, or Fail) for downtown's street trees, benches, and lighting. Storefront windows and outdoor displays also scored low with many windows being covered and displays often non-existent. Further, community feedback consistently identifies safety and security as top priorities for visitors to the downtown. Additional vacancies and economic hardship for businesses and residents caused by COVID-19 only contribute to the overall physical environment. These combined issues pose obstacles to attracting customers and businesses to the area.

In 2015, Brockton completed a Downtown Strategic Action plan that identified the need for a "Clean, Green, and Safe" Ambassadors program in the downtown. The community-generated vision was that ambassadors would provide services such as:

- Sweep and remove litter from public spaces
- Locate and remove graffiti
- Perform leaf blowing and snow removal from pedestrian ways
- Plant and maintain landscape beds, planters, and tree wells
- Install temporary streetscape elements (e.g., banners, seasonal displays)
- Be a highly visible presence and provide customer service to visitors, businesspeople, merchants, and residents
- Provide outreach for social services to homeless and other populations.

While the program had a goal to launch in 2016, funding obstacles prevented implementation.

Brockton seeks to implement a pilot program to help boost the perception of safety in the downtown as well as to demonstrate the value of services that a Business Improvement District could provide to the downtown. Ideally, a successful pilot would occur in parallel to a BID planning project and would eventually be transitioned to the newly formed BID for ongoing management.

Vacant Properties on Legion Parkway Photo: BSC Group

Worcester Green Corps Crew
Photo: Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce

Action Items

Confirm Pilot Scope – Determine pilot length as well as any changes in scope to the "Clean, Green, and Safe" Ambassadors program outlined in the 2015 Downtown Action Strategy. The amount and source of funding used for the pilot may impact scope. Program should also identify the lead entity for managing the program, and clearly define the roles of city departments (PD, DPW, etc.) or others who may complement the Ambassadors' work.

Launch Pilot – The lead entity will manage the program including recruitment and supervision of Ambassadors.

Monitor Program Effectiveness – As a pilot, the project should track metrics including but not limited to downtown foot traffic, quantity of graffiti/trash removed, social service referrals made, and business/visitors' perception of the program's impact on making a "Clean, Green, and Safe" environmental. These can be used to demonstrate value for a permanent program.

Explore Partnerships – The Worcester Green Corps (see box at right) is a partnership between the Chamber of Commerce, City of Worcester, Worcester Community Action Council, and the local United Way. These partners have identified a mutual interest and value in ensuring a clean and inviting city. A partnership-based program can diversify funding, expand community buy-in, and provide for additional scope, such as Worcester's YouthWorks program, that delivers additional benefits to the community.

Process

1. Confirm pilot partners including City departments and community organizations. Document roles and responsibilities of Ambassadors and partners.
2. Confirm metrics to be measured before, during, and after pilot.
3. Finalize pilot program funding and scope. These may occur together as funding may influence scope.
4. Recruit, train, and equip Ambassadors.
5. Launch pilot.
6. Monitor program metrics. Make adjustments as indicated and feasible for pilot.
7. Use pilot to engage additional partners, demonstrate program value, seek sustainable funding and partner organization. This may dovetail with Business Improvement District planning.
8. Close out pilot at determined time or transition to long-term model.

Best Practice/Example

WORCESTER GREEN CORPS

The Worcester Green Corps (WGC) is a new partnership program of the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, the City of Worcester, Worcester Community Action Council, and the United Way of Central Massachusetts, established in May of 2021. As Worcester experiences new levels of economic development and investment, it's in everyone's best interests to ensure the city is clean and inviting to residents and visitors alike. WGC is a collaborative effort to keep Worcester's streets and green spaces clean and beautiful on a year-round basis. By formally establishing this year-round program, WGC partners aim to augment existing cleanup efforts by leveraging the involvement of the business and nonprofit communities to assist in implementing beautification and environmental best practices throughout the city.

In addition to these year-round efforts, WGC works in collaboration with the Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC) and FreshStart508 to provide opportunities for leadership and employment to youth and systemically disadvantaged groups. WCAC's YouthWorks program occurs in three sessions: a six-week program in the summer, a 12-week program in the fall, and a 12-week program in the spring. The youth workers have the opportunity to learn about career readiness, green initiatives, and environmental careers, as well as to gain experience in leadership, community organizing, and program planning. FreshStart508 supplements the youth's efforts to beautify the city with their "So Fresh and So Clean" team. Through these collaborations, WGC, WCAC, and FreshStart508 are able to offer outreach and educational tools for employability, environmentalism, and mental health services to the community.

More information: https://www.worcesterchamber.org/worcester-green-corps/ and https://www.worcesterchamber.org/worcester-green-corps-kicks-off-elm-park/

Best Practice

Downtown Ambassador Programs

ADMIN CAPACITY

Location Various

Boston, MA

https://www.downtownboston.org/about-downtown-boston-bid/downtown-boston-bid-programs-and-impact/clean-and-hospitality-ambassadors/

- Mission: Cleanliness and Hospitality. Additionally: Provide Information to Businesses about the BID, Report incidents to police, Connect homeless persons to services, provide walking escorts.
- Host: Downtown Boston Business Improvement District
- Funding: BID

Little Rock, AK

https://www.downtownlr.com/pages/about-us/ambassador-program/

- Mission: "Directions, Upkeep, Graffiti, Safety"
- Host: Downtown Little Rock Partnership, a 501(c)3 non-profit whose mission is to accelerate the success of Downtown Little Rock, through leadership, partnership and initiative, sustaining and growing our vibrant urban core.
- Funding: Unknown

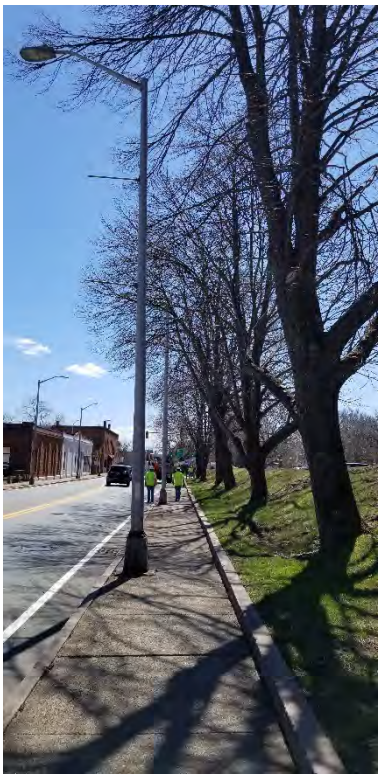
Durham, NC

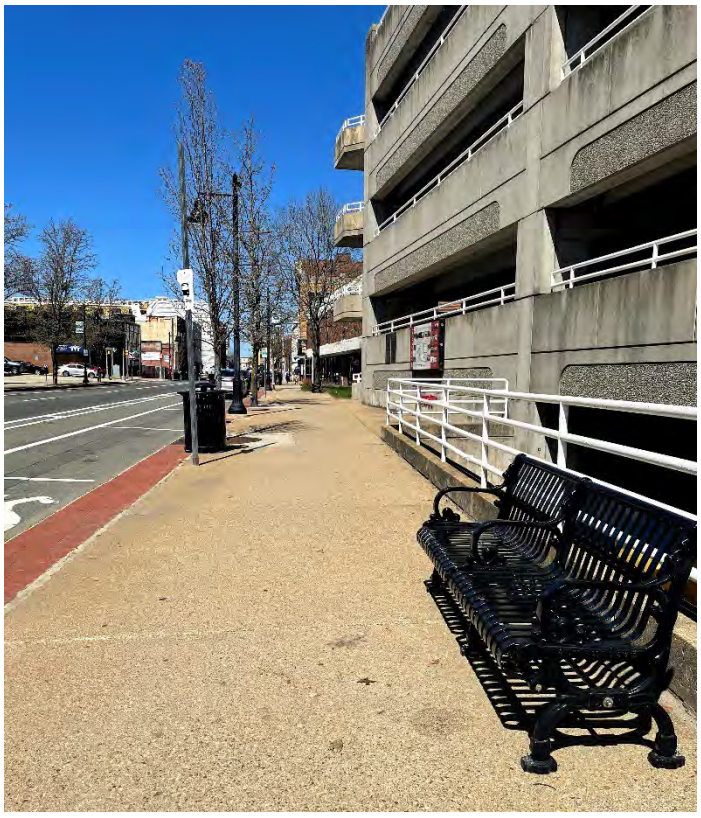
https://downtowndurham.com/ambassadors/

- Mission: "Clean and Safe Services"
- Host: Downtown Durham, Inc. (DDI) is a 501(c) 6 organization, formed in 1993 to serve as a catalyst for downtown revitalization. In 2012, DDI became the entity responsible for the downtown Durham Business Improvement District, a .8 mile area where property owners are assessed a small additional tax to create a cleaner, safer and more vibrant downtown community.
- Funding: BID

Implement Safety, Accessibility & Multi-Modal Complete Streets Improvements

Category	Public Realm
Location	Downtown Brockton study area | Census Tract 5109
Origin	City of Brockton, diagnostic phase findings, stakeholder engagement & WalkBoston Audit Memo
Budget	High Budget - Planning & Design: $50k - $150k & Construction: $250,000 - $400,000
Timeframe	Short-Term (0 - 5 years)
Risk	Low Risk – All projects within public right-of-way; potential political risk if improvements impact parking or construction impacts downtown business operations
Key Performance Indicators	Reduction in the number of collisions/accidents; more pedestrian activity; enhanced pedestrian safety; ADA compliant improvements
Partners & Resources	City of Brockton (Department of Planning & Economic Development Public Works Department), Mayor's Office, Council on Aging; MassDOT District 5, Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC), Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT); local businesses, property owners, and residents Funding Sources: ARPA funding; State Transportation Improvement Program; MA Complete Streets; MA Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program; MassWorks funding (in conjunction with any future development projects in Brockton); MassDevelopment TDI Creative Catalyst Grant Program (public art & placemaking elements); MA Office of Disability Municipal American with Disabilities Grant; AARP Challenge Grant (for quick-action implementation projects); DIF funding; Local funding sources and development agreements
Diagnostic	The success of a downtown is dependent upon the surrounding physical environment with roadways and streetscapes serving as a vital component to the urban fabric, having the ability to both positively or negatively affect public perception and attitude toward a specific space. While streets are necessary for bringing people to a place, their layout and ability to serve all modes directly influences where people are persuaded to stop. Despite the fair to good condition of the sidewalks and roadbeds that exist throughout the downtown Brockton study area, certain sections lack streetscape amenities such as benches and street trees, ADA compliant sidewalks, soft landscaping, and adequate lighting, that not only contribute to the overall comfort and safety but create an enjoyable environment and welcoming space for pedestrians. One of the longer-term challenges for downtown Brockton is encouraging pedestrian activity and promoting an active 18-hour downtown environment that supports local businesses. COVID-19 has made the need for increasing foot traffic in downtown Brockton even more acute as employees that once patronized local establishments began working remotely. Improving the downtown streetscape will be a critical component to overcome this challenge. By considering streetscape design that aspires to achieve aesthetic as well as practical goals, improvements will support improved pedestrian safety and access, regeneration of vacant buildings, and create new opportunities for revitalizing the downtown.





Streetscape conditions in the Study Area. Clockwise from top left: Crescent Street crosswalk and curb ramp; Crescent Street directional signage; Montello Street sidewalk; Worn "Welcome to Brockton" street banners on Legion Parkway; View of Legion Parkway looking southwest; Damaged tree grate and sidewalk on Legion Parkway; Recently upgraded streetscape along Main Street near the District Court; Main Street sidewalk and street furniture near Adams Parking Garage.

Photos: BSC Group

Action Items

Develop a Downtown Streetscape/Public Realm Action Plan to enhance the pedestrian experience and that will support small businesses with a focus on multimodal improvements, accessibility, safety, and aesthetics. In addition to major capital projects, there are opportunities for "tactical" interventions that can transform the public realm through lower-cost, rapid implementation. The Public Realm Action Plan will allow the City to identify and leverage placemaking opportunities in the downtown street network.

Data Collection: Create a GIS-based inventory of existing sidewalk infrastructure within the study area (and possibly city-wide) to include width, condition, edge treatment, ADA-compliance, and obstacles/trip hazards. Include recommendations for repair and associated costs.

Focus Areas: Identify specific streets and/or corridors to focus on, such as Legion Parkway that supports heavy pedestrian traffic due to a health clinic and several shops located along that block.

The City has already implemented streetscape/sidewalk improvements within the study area including portions of Main Street and Montello Street, School Street, Centre Street, and W. Railroad Avenue. Improvements are also planned for Petronelli Way, which boasts a new municipal parking garage.

Improvements: As the plan is developed, focus on the following:

- Improve uneven sidewalks
- Address obstacles in the pedestrian path
- Add buffers between walkers and moving traffic
- Add street trees and replace dead street trees
- Address pedestrian realm lighting
- Replace worn-out or missing banners
- Install decorative street lighting
- Incorporate publicly accessible art into streetscape improvements, such as artist-designed street furniture
- Install trash receptacles (requires trash maintenance - see the RRP Project Recommendation "Pilot the Downtown Ambassadors Program")

Process

Prior to developing the Downtown Streetscape/Public Realm Action Plan, consider the following:

1. Scope

Establish goals and evaluation criteria along with deliverables. The City should consider whether to focus on the entire study area or specific streets/corridors to maximize their resources and available funding.

2. Funding

Identify and secure funding source(s) to develop a Downtown Streetscape/Public Realm Action Plan. Funding sources could include, but are not limited to, City funding, mitigation funds from local development projects, or State funding sources. When requesting funding, the City should highlight that investment in this initial planning effort will provide the City with a document to then apply for substantial grant funding for implementation.

3. Planning process with Advisory Committee

The lead entities (e.g., Dept. of Planning and Economic Development and Public Works) will convene an advisory committee, with representation from major stakeholders. The leads will develop an RFP for consulting services to develop a Downtown Streetscape/Public Realm Action Plan. The leads, with the support of the advisory committee, will publicize the RFP to solicit proposals, review submissions and hire a consultant.

4. Refine Scope of Work

Once the consultant is selected, they should finalize a scope of services with the lead entities, to include some or all of the following:

- A public realm action plan document detailing the processes, vision, goals, strategies, findings, implementation guidelines, and recommendations. The document should contain visuals to simplify complex concepts.
- Specific design concepts with short- and mid-term solutions that is graphic in nature with limited text to describe concepts.
- Cost estimate and phasing plan to describe a logical implementation strategy.
- A summary of community engagement process and findings.
- Presentations to Downtown Brockton stakeholders.
- A phased implementation schedule that contemplates levels of funding availability.

5. Coordinate with the development of a preliminary design for the planned reintroduction of two-way traffic circulation in downtown Brockton to minimize disruption and make efficient use of funding.

6. Tie streetscape improvements into the planned development of Green Links in downtown Brockton.

7. Implementation

- Secure funding for the preparation of design and bid-ready documents for the construction of various improvements selected from the plan. This may require topographic survey, preparation of preliminary/final designs, approvals from various local or state agencies, bidding/award and construction oversight.
- Secure funding to hire a general contractor to implement the work. This funding may come from various sources including Complete Streets and/or Shared Streets and Spaces to which the City has yet to apply for.

8. Other Process Considerations:

- **Coordinate with city-wide branding and wayfinding efforts** - Signage, colors, and other design features included as part of this effort should align with concurrent efforts to enhancing branding and placemaking throughout the city.
- **Leverage planned utility and streetscape upgrades** identified in the 2020 Downtown Traffic Study to support placemaking efforts - for example, the proposed installation of underground conduit during roadway reconstruction to facilitate the deployment of the fiber optic equipment can be expanded upon to provide the infrastructure necessary for projection mapping on building façades and public spaces. Projection mapping is creative digital placemaking that requires electrical service and high-end video projection equipment.
- **Engage artists and designers** to help rethink and redesign streetscapes as they are replaced or upgraded to help conceal or accentuate elements.
- **Incorporate green infrastructure elements** to help achieve both environmental and mobility goals.
- **Coordinate with OCPC and MassDOT** to place desired pedestrian realm improvements on the Transportation Improvement Plan that are not included in the planned reintroduction of two-way traffic circulation in downtown Brockton.

Further Conceptual Wayfinding Plan and Signage Program

Category	Public Realm
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Site Visits and Stakeholder Engagement
Budget	Medium to Large Budget
Timeframe	Short-Term (< 5 years) – Onboarding consultant or expert to devise strategy will be short-term; implementing strategy and identifying funding needed physical elements will require more time
Risk	Medium Risk - requires political will, dedicated funding, and participating businesses/organizations/stakeholders; some risks exist with signage fabrication (e.g., ability to fabricate as designed, material costs) and installation (e.g., planning for electric/interactive signage).
Key Performance Indicators	Level of ownership of brand by stakeholders/constituents; Installation and use of signage; Public surveys on satisfaction with chosen brand, usefulness of wayfinding; Longevity of brand/wayfinding system
Partners & Resources	City of Brockton (DPED, DPW), business/property owners, residents/citizen groups, Brockton Redevelopment Authority; Old Colony Planning Council; local artists Potential Funding Sources: DHCD Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (planning); MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Program (implementation); local funding sources
Diagnostic	Pre-COVID, the small businesses in Downtown Brockton relied heavily on nearby employers such as WB Mason and the District Court to generate their customer base. With the advent of COVID, many downtown employers have moved to a remote workplace and there are very few employees remaining downtown during and after working hours to frequent local restaurants or other small businesses. As COVID approached, Brockton was finalizing a conceptual wayfinding plan and signage program to enhance visitors' and residents' sense of place in Downtown Brockton. The program also sought to allow visitors to easily find Downtown Brockton, allow vehicle-driving visitors to conveniently find parking and explore downtown on foot, improve the downtown's business opportunities, and improve the way people identify the downtown area. The plan identified nodes, destinations, and signage hierarchy; however, a specific downtown brand and design were not developed. While downtown Brockton may be accessible for those who are familiar with it, customers passing through may not be aware of local offerings from retailers that lack a visible location or adequate signage. Also, customers might find it difficult to park, not because there is insufficient parking but because inadequate wayfinding makes finding spots a challenge. Addressing these visual impediments to accessibility is often a critical component of district revitalization efforts. Following the impacts of COVID, including loss of businesses in the downtown, shifts to remote work, and economic hardship for businesses and individuals, furthering this plan, including a branding effort that ties into wayfinding, will be important to support existing businesses and help attract new customers and businesses.

Branding Basics

The chosen brand will play an important role in the attraction of visitors and businesses to downtown. As part of a branding process, Brockton will examine who it is and what story it wants to tell about itself.

Below are important Phases and Products of a branding initiative that should be addressed:

Phases:

- Research & discovery – This phase sets the stage providing the design firm with the right information, project team, communications standards, and recent reports/plans. Cities that would like a more public process will need more time/budget in this phase to accommodate.
- Concept direction – When the design firm shares a very basic idea of the potential direction and asks for validation. Feedback is very important in this phase. Don't hold back.
- Visual language – Include development of the accessories to the logo – color, image style, copy tone/voice.
- Logo design & refinement – The design firm should present a set number of options reflected in their proposal. The concept that has the most potential should be selected for refinement.
- User testing & refinement – This phase should share the concept with stakeholders and asking for commentary of which will be reviewed for integrity/relevance. The design team will revise the concept accordingly and share another presentation of their findings.

Products:

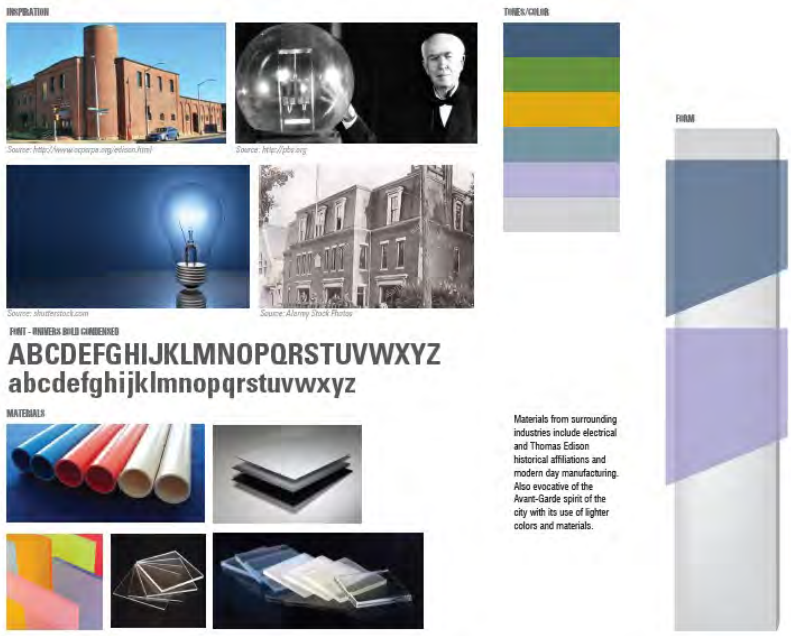
- Request for Proposals – This document serves as an important baseline for the project, including timeline, budget, stakeholders, goals, and deliverables.
- Brand guide – This document is organic and will develop over time but should include standards for how and when the brand is used. It will include logo in color, B&W, color details, applications of the logo being used appropriately/inappropriately, and more.

Integration of art into Worcester's branding and wayfinding program
Source: Selbert Perkins Design

Action Items

Develop Brand (6-8 months)

1) Assemble Key Players:
   - **Design firm** contracted to complete the work
   - **Brand project manager** from the City who will manage the project and maintain the brand standards after project completion
   - **Stakeholders** from the community or City who will have input at decision points
   - **Constituents** including residents and other community members, who are considered throughout the process and are invited for opinion at key milestones.
2) Conduct a brand audit to see how the City is representing itself visually and look at commonalities among the examples. Consider if and how the "City of Champions" tagline fits the current and future Brockton. Consider how to build upon the city's history and iconic architecture in the updated brand.
3) Approach local artists for branding efforts containing art. This supports Brockton's new identity having elements that come from within and are sourced locally.
4) Ensure a strong research phase in brand development to understand what makes Brockton special now and how the new visual identity will look in 5-10 years from now. Aim for an authentic result that can stand the test of time.
5) Make public engagement accessible. Use of free survey tools (Google, Microsoft, SurveyMonkey, etc.) at every step of the process for efficiency and a democratic process. Try using a QR code in high traffic areas with encouraging messaging "Help us rebrand Brockton!"


INSPIRATION
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FIRM
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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
MATERIALS
Materials from surrounding industries include electrical and Thomas Edison historical affiliations and modern day manufacturing. Also evocative of the Avant-Garde spirit of the city with its use of lighter colors and materials.

Potential signage design inspiration discussed in Conceptual Wayfinding Plan
Source: Harriman for City of Brockton

Design wayfinding program (4-8 months)

1) Build upon the work completed in the Conceptual Wayfinding Plan (signage network, destinations, etc.) and use of newly developed brand.
2) Issue RFP – Consider whether design firm will oversee fabrication/installation. This may shorten overall timeline.
3) Complete design phases including engagement, signage standards development, concept designs & design development.

Complete fabrication and installation (3-6 months)

1) Provide sufficient documentation regarding design and location of signage elements to selected fabricators and installers.
2) Negotiate signage design and fabrication. There is an opportunity to value engineer signage, thus reducing cost, if needed.
3) Conduct preliminary site surveys with installer and fabricator to plan for signage that requires electricity for illumination, digital displays, or interactivity.

Example of pedestrian scale wayfinding signage
Source: Harriman for City of Brockton

Process

Branding

1) Assemble team & develop RFP. Consider whether design firm will also complete wayfinding design and construction administration or whether these will be separate tasks/vendors.

2) Select design firm.

3) Work through phases identified in "branding basics." Consider specific action items identified including brand audit, artist engagement and public engagement.

4) Finalize brand and brand guide. Ensure City staff person (ideally brand project manager) is in place to maintain brand standards on an ongoing basis.

Wayfinding

1) Assemble team & develop RPF. Project team and design firm may carryover from branding task.

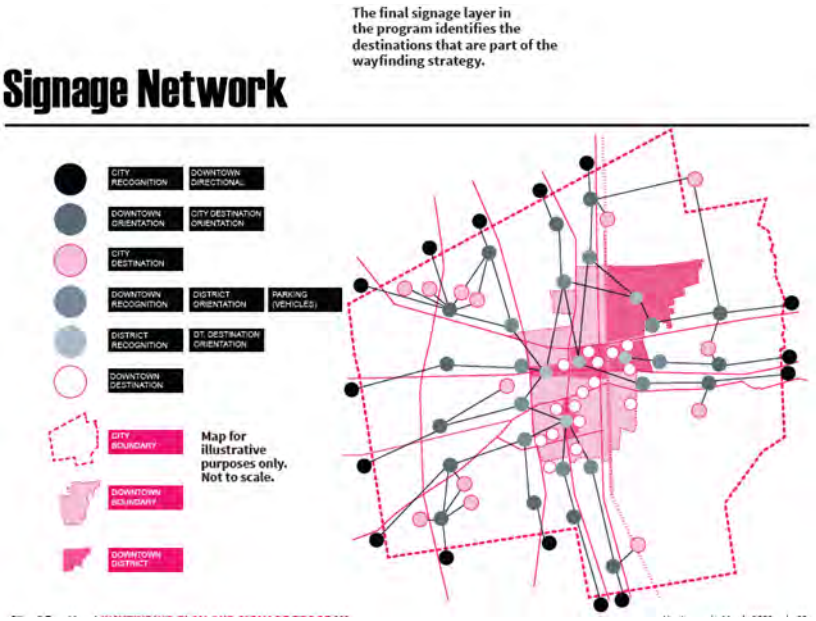
2) Complete wayfinding design tasks including stakeholder and public engagement, concept design, and others. Wayfinding analysis may be expedited if building upon previously completed conceptual wayfinding plan.

Fabrication & Installation

1) Complete bidding & negotiation for fabrication.
2) Fabricate signage.
3) Determine construction administrator (City or design firm) and oversee installation.

Monitoring and Future Improvements

1) Projects should monitor public perception and use and utilize these data for future improvements.
2) Many wayfinding projects add new features as time progresses. For example, Somerville's Neighborways project incorporated wayfinding and designated walking/biking routes to connect residential areas to commercial district (see Best Practice sheet).



Signage Network developed for Conceptual Wayfinding Plan
Source: Harriman for City of Brockton

For budgets related to signage and wayfinding, we advise to expect a range in cost. The budget will fluctuate based on the experience of the design firm, needs of the client, scale of the signage program, the schedule for the deliverables and the cost of fabrication and installation.

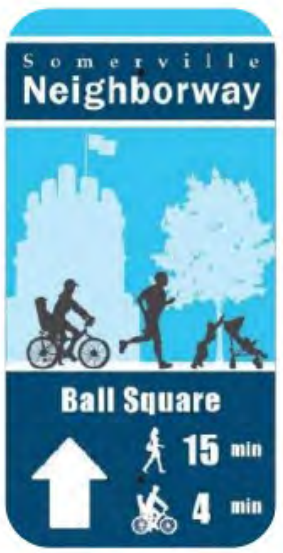
Wayfinding Design $ 25K - $150K+

- Stakeholder engagement (interviews) $5 – 15K
- Public Engagement (survey – online or in person) $10K – $20K
- Wayfinding Analysis (Circulation Plans, Sign Location Plans, etc.) $8K – $18K
- Signage Standards or Master Plan Document (plus above services) $10K – $25K
- Concept Design $15K - $30K
- Design Development $15K - $30K
- Design Intent $10K - $20K
- Bidding + Negotiation $5K – $10K
- Construction Administration $10K – $25K

Fabrication $75 – $500K

- Simple metal or vinyl signage $5k – $25K
- Illuminated pylons/gateways $50K - $200K each
- Non-illuminated, freestanding signage $25K- $50K (each)
- General Conditions and Installation $20 – 175K
- Digital directories $25K- $100K
- Mapping $5K - $25K

Wayfinding budget estimates by task Source: Selbert Perkins Design



Best Practice

Branding and Wayfinding Examples

PUBLIC REALM

Location Various

Integrate Brand and Art Into Your Wayfinding System

More info: https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-realm-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download (page. 55)

Worcester, MA undertook an effort to increase awareness and tourism, and to improve the overall image of the City by creating an iconic brand and functional wayfinding system for visitors and residents. As a large city, it was important to create consistency but also provide distinctions between districts to help people navigate and understand the unique character and stories of each area. Tasks included:

- City-wide logo
- District identities
- Storytelling and interpretive elements
- Signage design
- Art opportunities

Connect Neighborhood to Business Districts via Neighborways

More info: https://www.mass.gov/doc/public-realm-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download (page. 95)

Neighborways, also known as neighborhood greenways or bicycle boulevards, are low stress, comfortable, designated biking and walking routes. They are typically local roadways that connect neighborhoods and destinations such as downtown business districts, transit stops, schools, and employment centers. Somerville, MA is the Boston Region's first Neighborway network which began in 2014 as student projects. The evolution of the program has grown each year to span 2+ miles of connected streets. The City developed guidelines for treatments based on research, testing, and implementing tactical traffic calming treatments.

Process:

- Project initiation & planning
- Community design process
- Implementation
- Ongoing monitoring/maintenance
- Evaluation

Enforce and Incentivize Maintenance of Vacant and Neglected Commercial Buildings

Category	Private Realm
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Diagnostic phase findings, City of Brockton staff, and stakeholder engagement (Black Owned Brockton representative)
Budget	Medium Budget - Funds will be required to support the project and staffing on an ongoing basis
Timeframe	Short-Term (< 5 Years) – The establishment of the project is short-term; however, this will be an on-going program
Risk	High Risk - Owner interest/willingness to participate; legal and building code enforcement, barriers and costs; and success will depend upon incentive programs being put in place
Key Performance Indicators	Investment by property owners in commercial properties; Growth and survival of existing businesses; Number of new businesses opened; Vacant storefronts occupied with active businesses
Partners & Resources	Partners: City of Brockton Department of Planning and Economic Development, Building Department, Board of Health, Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, and other city agencies, along with the mayor's Quality of Life Task Force, attorneys, and elected officials; local property owners and real estate professionals Funding Sources: ARPA / EDA funding for economic development and rebuilding; tax abatement/relief/incentive/TIF programs (these can be reinvested into grants or incentives for the program); Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding; façade improvement programs

Diagnostic

There are many vacant commercial buildings downtown that have not been maintained and have fallen into disrepair. The diagnostic phase revealed an estimated 30 storefronts in downtown (22% of all storefronts) are vacant, and this number has increased due to COVID-19. In addition. building façades received a grade of "C" -- meaning that more than 25% of the properties require significant building façade improvements. Moreover, many owners do not advertise their vacant space and small business owners are unable to find space that is up to code to establish a presence downtown; accordingly, there is a need to incentivize property owners to make improvements and to post contact information for space that is available for lease or sale, etc., to encourage commercial activity in downtown.

Brockton, like many other communities, realized that COVID-19 has exacerbated issues around property owner investment in maintaining and upgrading commercial properties as well as contributing to an increase in commercial vacancies. Furthermore, the City does not currently have an up-to-date database of vacancies. Conversely, the City needs to know what is available for development, redevelopment or occupancy within the downtown to support a strong economic development initiative.

Vacant storefronts along Legion Parkway. Photo: BSC Group

Long-vacant First Parish building (19 Main Street) that is now owned by the Brockton Redevelopment Authority. Photo: BSC Group

Action Items

The plan of action to address vacant and neglected buildings in Downtown Brockton will include the following activities. These are intended to leverage and complement the City's recent adoption of software that is centralizing code enforcement data from various City departments.

Assess current code and enforcement issues and develop a plan that will address the current conditions of derelict commercial buildings and put in place regulations and programs to support the economic development of those properties – this will be a combined effort within the City and a consultant.

Develop programs to support and incentivize building and business owners -Incentivize owners to encourage the maintenance of vacant or neglected commercial buildings to support public health and safety and to enhance economic development in downtown Brockton. The City should invest ARPA funds into façade/storefront and interior improvement grants, such as a Commercial Building Rehabilitation Fund (please refer to the Process section).

Strengthen enforcement activities through adoption of a Minimum Maintenance Ordinance. The City may also look to programs that would disincentivize vacancies, such as a vacant storefront bylaw. For example, the Town of Arlington adopted a vacant storefront bylaw in 2016. This bylaw requires commercial and industrial property owners to register their vacant properties and thereby ensure the safety and proper maintenance of those facilities, while actively seeking new renters. If property owners fail to comply, they face fines. This type of disincentive would require political will and community buy-in to be successful.

Develop an electronic database to track vacancies and building conditions. Paper records currently maintained by the Building Department could be digitized by an intern given staffing limitations. As the database is developed it will also serve as a communication tool with building owners as it will be regularly updated.

Develop a phased-in plan to address the buildings within the project area – this will serve to evaluate the program in its initial stages.

Increase municipal capacity for code enforcement. Enhanced code enforcement will require increasing staff capacity in both the Department of Planning & Economic Development and the Building Department. One option to explore is an inter-municipal shared service agreement. By pooling resources, functions, and expertise, a consortium of cities and towns, especially those that have fewer resources or are smaller, can improve compliance with their statutory and regulatory mandates and expand the public health protections and services they offer residents. For example, the Cities of Methuen and Lawrence and the Town of Dracut received a Shared Public Health Services Grant to share services to provide for increased code enforcement.

Process

Review the current regulations in place for vacant or derelict buildings. This should be a combined effort within City Departments – the Department of Planning and Economic Development, the Building Department, etc. Communication between these departments will be essential to the effectiveness, enforcement and evaluation of this program. If a consultant is hired to assist in this process, see below.

Sub-procedure for hiring a consultant – key officials should first outline their expectations before engaging the consultant, these include: RFP process and/or interviewing to procure consultant; draft contract, budget, funding; analysis/evaluation of findings; recommendations for code, tax/incentive programs, and programmatic changes.

The City or consultant could provide the following:

- Code enforcement program review and analysis
- Municipal code review and recommendations
- Design of a program to address new enforcement challenges
- Establish minimum standards, fines and/or tax incentives
- Staff support needed for implementation of the targeted program or consultant if additional staff is not hired by the City

Process Continued

Programs to explore utilizing City staff or a consultant include:

- Commercial Building Rehabilitation Fund (CBRF), which is envisioned to have two components. The first will provide zero interest loans (potentially grants) of up to $50,000 to property owners to bring their first-floor retail space into code compliance and/or make improvements to retain or attract a retail tenant. The second component will provide zero-interest loans or grants to make improvements to upper floors for nonretail tenants.

- Minimum Maintenance Ordinance – A Minimum Maintenance Ordinance, also known as a Demolition by Neglect Ordinance, provides a method of addressing buildings that are suffering from deferred maintenance – in other words, it attempts to address the deterioration of a building before it is too late.

Database development – Develop a list/database of all buildings in the target area, though realistically this is a program that should be adopted city-wide using Excel or the recently adopted code enforcement software. The database should capture relevant information (contact information, ownership, square footage, number of floors, tenants, residences, conditions, violations, and structural inspections, etc.; and tie to GIS/Assessor's information). This will require ownership by one department, data input by a designated champion using data collected by multiple departments, and regular updates as additional information is recorded by the City.

Instituting and phasing in the program – Through discussions it was determined that the initial focus of enhanced code enforcement efforts should be on Legion Parkway, then branch out into the other areas in Downtown. This will allow the City to get the program up and running in a manageable way. With the database in place, it will be easier for City officials to approach the building owners as the program is launched.

Communication of the program – The Mayor or other city official should communicate the new program through one-on-one meetings, community sessions with property owners, showcasing owners that are "Building a Better Downtown Brockton" and press releases on the program citing and focusing on the positive elements of the program, i.e., renewing blighted buildings, economic development initiatives, businesses occupying formerly vacant storefronts, safety and livability of the area, etc.

Evaluation of the program – It is important to evaluate the program and its effectiveness as it is instituted. What is the response from building owners - are they receptive to the program? There may be a need to modify it as the City works through the process.

Best Practice: Minimum Maintenance Ordinance

A Minimum Maintenance Ordinance, also known as a Demolition by Neglect Ordinance, provides a method of addressing buildings that are suffering from deferred maintenance. A lack of basic maintenance can lead to the gradual deterioration of a building. Eventually, this can result in public safety concerns, major structural issues and ultimately the demise of the building. The benefit of a minimum maintenance ordinance is that it can proactively require an owner to address maintenance needs, through stabilizing and securing the building, before the building is lost. The required standards of basic maintenance are typically included within the ordinance. These would include steps to prevent water infiltration through roofs, adequate protective coatings on exterior walls, replacement of broken window glass, maintaining gutters and downspouts, securing the property from unauthorized entrance, removing brush from around the building, cleaning debris from the property as well as others.

Most Minimum Maintenance Ordinances apply to all areas of the municipality and are a stand-alone ordinance.

Source: https://www.preservationmass.org/minimummaintenancebylaws

Assist Businesses with Establishing an Online Presence

Category	Revenue/Sales
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Observation during diagnostic phase that very few businesses in Downtown Brockton Study Area have websites
Budget	Medium Budget Est. $1,000-$2,000/business to design and build website
Timeframe	Short-Term – Project Planning (1-3 months) then 1-2 weeks for a website to be designed and built depending on complexity
Risk	Low Risk – Project timelines are dependent on participant involvement. Use screening process to make sure those chosen have time and ability to commit. Language can present a challenge. Invest in translation services to make program available to all interested businesses.
Key Performance Indicators	Number of businesses with an online presence (website, Google, Yelp, TripAdvisor, etc.) before/after program; Website development time; Website/online listing traffic
Partners & Resources	Metro South Chamber of Commerce, Old Colony Planning Council, Brockton Open for Business Initiative, Brockton Redevelopment Authority Funding Sources: ARPA Small Business Technical Assistance; MGCC Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program (if the lead entity is a non-profit); private sponsors

Diagnostic

A well-developed online presence is a pivotal way for businesses to reach out to the world. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as the world stayed home and food, grocery, and other shopping moved online, being able to offer online shopping, food ordering, appointment booking, or even communicating changes to business hours or procedures due to COVID became essential. It is likely that this digital shift will continue and businesses that have best managed their online presence will have greater visibility and offer more convenience to customers helping them compete in the marketplace.

A cursory online search of Downtown Brockton businesses reveals that very few have websites. Searching "restaurant" in Downtown Brockton on Yelp.com showed that only 2 of the first 10 listings had been claimed by the businesses. Businesses may not have an online presence due to a number of factors: cost, technical know-how, language barriers, time, lack of perceived value, or others. By addressing these barriers and supporting businesses in an inclusive manner, more Brockton businesses can realize the benefits of a well-maintained online presence in today's economy.

Action Items

Considering the current online presence in the downtown, a two-pronged approach should be available depending on the capacity and level of interest for businesses. Business should be able to participate in either or both options.

1: Claim and Manage Free Business Listings

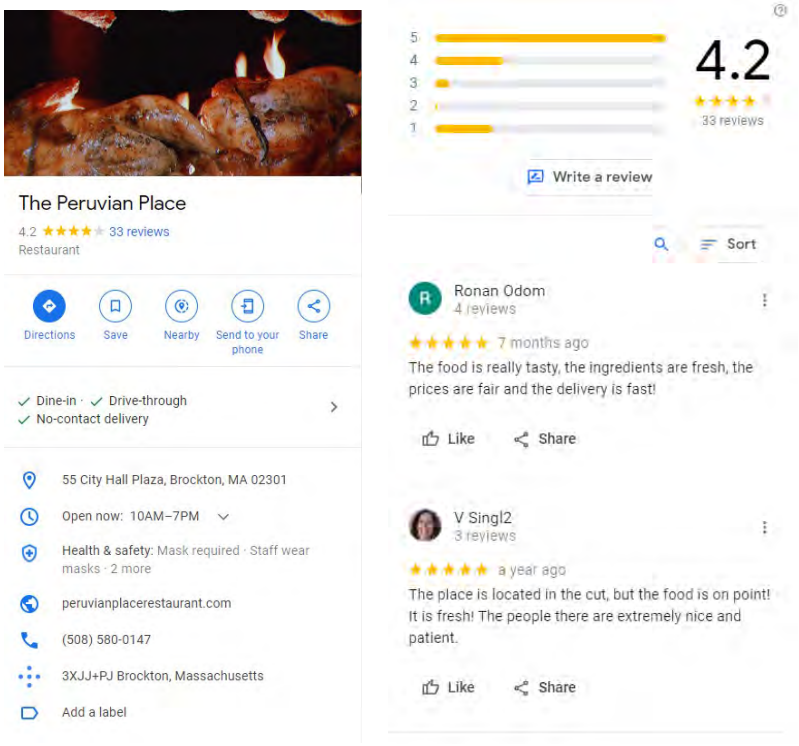
Several platforms allow for crowd-sourced information about businesses. Customers visit these listing to find basic information about businesses such as location, phone number, website, and hours. Customers can also leave reviews and post photos. Common platforms with free business listing are: GoogleMyBusiness, Yelp, and Tripadvisor.

These listings exist whether businesses manage them or not; however, when businesses claim and begin to manage their listings they can ensure accurate information is posted and begin to easily market their business with photos, posts, and offers. Platforms may also offer integrations with online ordering, delivery, and reservation systems further removing barriers. Additionally, Google allows businesses to add attributes such as Black-owned, veteran-led, LGBTQ+ friendly, and more to increase visibility when customers search for these types of businesses.

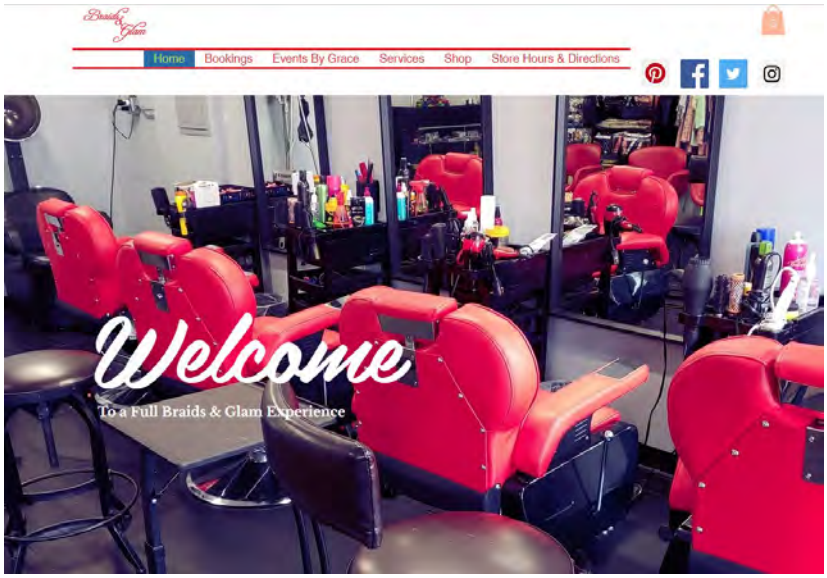
While each business is unique, the process for claiming and managing listings is not. As such, this service could be provided to a larger number of participants via online and/or in-person workshops. Whether online or in-person, workshops should take place when users have access to the internet so they can claim their listings and ask questions in real-time. Knowing they will leave the workshops with basic tasks complete can increase value to businesses and overall program effectiveness.

2: Rapid Website Design & Development

For businesses able to commit to more upfront time commitment, one-on-one assistance to develop and design a business website can be offered. Together with the project technical experts (e.g., web designer, photographer), a rapid (<2 week) schedule for developing the website can be created. Domain name, look and feel, links to social media and online platforms, and more will be completed. Once the website is published and handed off to the owner, frequent edits and continuing marketing should be encouraged.



Business Listing & Customer Reviews for The Peruvian Place, Brockton Source: GoogleMyBusiness



Website homepage for Braids & Glam, Brockton. The website offers online bookings. Source: https://www.braidsnglam.com/

Process

Planning:

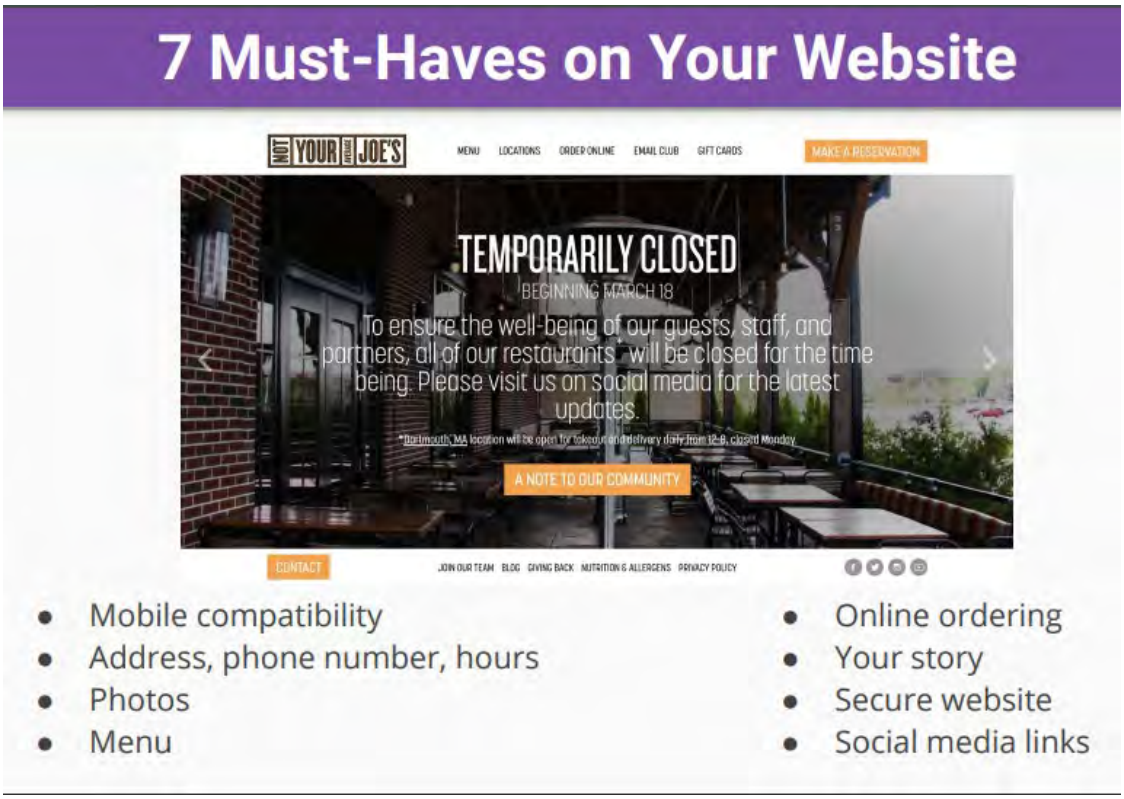
1. Confirm project owner(s). Project owner(s) should be able to effectively outreach and engage businesses to maximize participation.
2. Assemble funding and project technical expert(s) to deliver services (e.g. website design/development, photography, online presence, translation).
3. Develop outreach and application/screening plans to reach broadest number of businesses. Application/screening should ensure those who are chosen can commit time required to complete work.
4. Determine program metrics to measure program impacts before and after implementation. See key performance indicators for suggestions.

Implementation:

5. Schedule and host workshops for managing free business listings. The application process may collect information on best setting (online or in-person) and days/times. Multiple workshops should be offered. Consider a nominal cost to participate as research shows that participants are more engaged and apt to attend when they have paid to participate in a program or event. Proceeds from registration fee may even be used for a raffle for participants as further encouragement.
6. Screen applicants for rapid website development. Schedule selected businesses to work with project technical experts. See process steps used by Boston Main Street's Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative in the best practices.

Evaluation:

7. Collect post implementation metrics and participant feedback. Integrate lessons to guide future phases of the program.



*Screenshot from Restaurant Marketing Training Source: Lowell Business Recovery Task Force; **https://www.lowellma.gov/1457/Lowell-Business-Recovery-Task-Force***

Best Practice

Rapid Website Development

REVENUES & SALES

Location Boston, MA

About

Established in 2019, the Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative has piloted, vetted, and implemented its mission in partnership with Boston Main Streets Foundation, the City of Boston, and Citizens Bank. The program provides Rapid Website Development, a process that has been refined through hundreds of builds, in 1-2 weeks per site for a cost of $1,000 - $2,000, depending on complexity.

For more information visit: https://www.mass.gov/doc/revenue-sales-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download (pg. 28)

Website Build Process

Onboarding Phase

1. Explain the simple design process and benefits of the end website
2. Purchase the desired domain name
3. Set manageable goals with clear timeframes

Discovery Phase

4. Gather content and determine look/feel for the website
5. Collect media such as photos and video *(Schedule photographer if required)*
6. Link Social Media *(if applicable)*
7. Link online selling platforms *(if applicable)*

Review/Finalization Phase

8. Review website with business owner prior to publishing live
9. Publish site and encourage business owner to incorporate their new website into their marketing plan
10. Handoff website to business owner and encourage frequent edits!

Best Practice

Lowell Business Recovery Task Force

REVENUES & SALES

Location Lowell, MA

Lowell Business Recovery Task Force: Small Business Marketing Webinars and Grant Program

https://www.lowellma.gov/1457/Lowell-Business-Recovery-Task-Force

The City of Lowell Economic Development Office convened the Lowell Business Recovery Task force to centralize resources for our business community and to effectively assist our local businesses during these uncertain times. The mission of the Lowell Business Recovery Task Force is to provide support, technical assistance, and communicate, in multiple languages and across various platforms, state and federal guidelines to assist our local businesses re-open.

One component of the Task Force's work includes the Small Business Marketing Webinars and Grant Program (webinar slides available at: https://www.lowellma.gov/1471/Small-Business-Marketing-Webinars-Grant-).

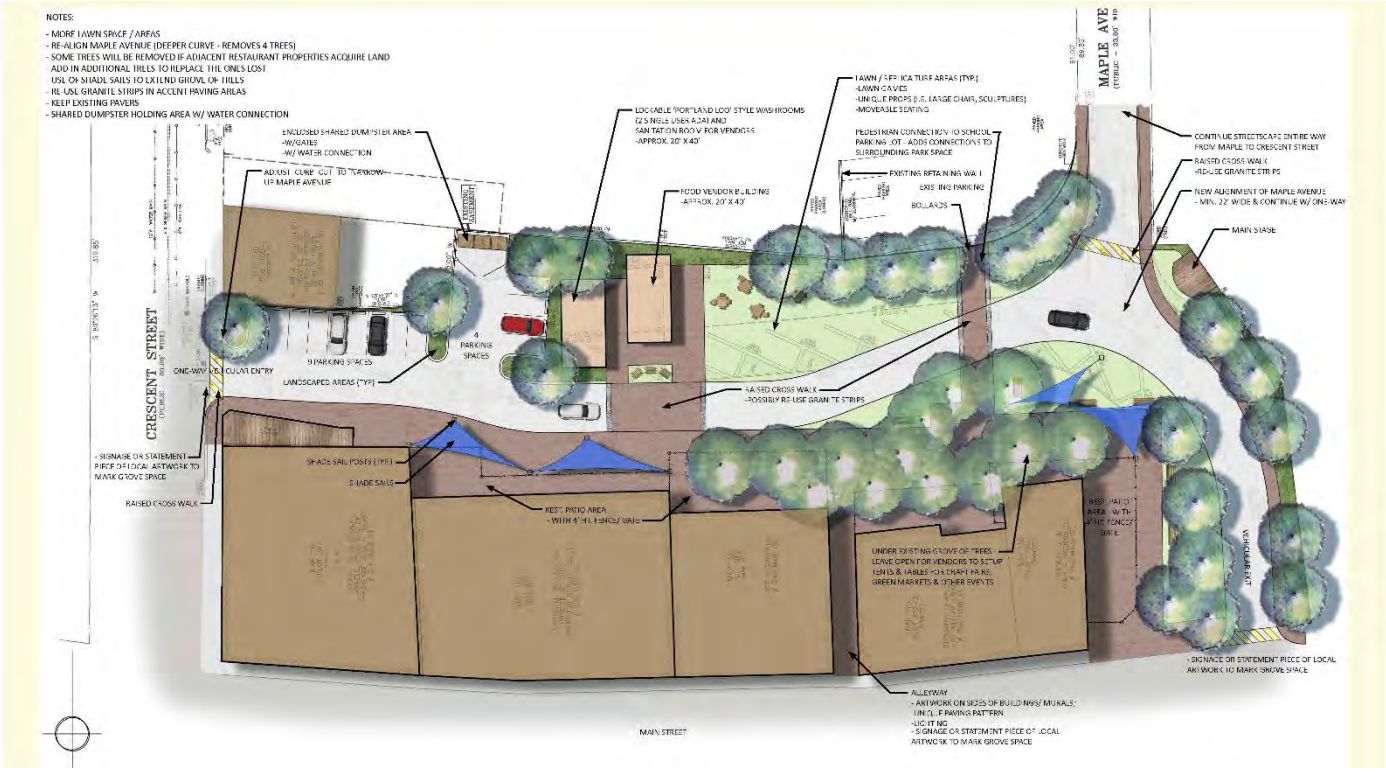
The City of Lowell's Economic Development Office created a marketing grant program available to Lowell's small, independently owned businesses that were most significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Grant awards of up to $2,000 were available to eligible businesses until funds were depleted. Eligible applicants were required to participate in at least 2 free webinars (up to 4 total) in order to receive funding.

The Task Force additionally launched a website to provide a central resource for businesses with information about financial resources, provide information for specific sectors, and link to other programs organizing small business assistance and marketing campaigns.

Screenshot from Small Business Marketing Webinar Source: Tomo360 and Lowell Business Recovery Task Force

Develop and Implement a Program Management Plan for Sycamore Grove

Category		Admin Capacity
Location		Sycamore Grove (25 Crescent Street) | Census Tract 5109
Origin		City of Brockton
Budget		Medium Budget – $60,000-$70,000 recommended salary for program manager/entity
Timeframe		Short Term (<5 years) for establishing the program management plan
Risk		Medium Risk – requires political will, dedicated funding, and participating businesses, organizations, and stakeholders
Key Performance Indicators		Number of events held annually; Number of sponsorships; Growth in community association partnerships; Buy-in / engagement with local restaurants; Number of attendees; Provision of culturally relevant programming; Change in economic activity downtown
Partners & Resources		City of Brockton, PROVA!, Downtown Brockton Association, Brockton Farmer's Market, Black Owned Brockton, Brockton Arts, UpNext (a matchmaking platform designed to connect brands that are looking to do pop-ups with spaces that want to host them) Funding: DIF funds for concert series, Brockton Cultural Council funds, public / private grant funding (e.g. Levitt Foundation, etc.); sponsorships


NOTES:
- MORE LAWN SPACE / AREAS
- RE-ALIGN MAPLE AVENUE (DEEPER CURVE - REMOVES 4 TREES)
- SOME TREES WILL BE REMOVED IF ADJACENT RESTAURANT PROPERTIES ACQUIRE LAND
- ADD IN ADDITIONAL TREES TO REPLACE THE ONES LOST
- USE OF SHADE SAILS TO EXTEND GROVE OF TREES
- RE-USE GRANITE STRIPS IN ACCENT PAVING AREAS
- KEEP EXISTING PAVERS
- SHARED DUMPSTER HOLDING AREA W/ WATER CONNECTION
MAPLE AVE
CRESCENT STREET
ENCLOSED SHARED DUMPSTER AREA -W/GATES -W/ WATER CONNECTION
ADJUST CURB CUT TO NARROW UP MAPLE AVENUE
LOCKABLE 'PORTLAND LOO' STYLE WASHROOMS (2) SINGLE USER ADA LAND SANITATION ROOM FOR VENDORS -APPROX. 20' X 40'
FOOD VENDOR BUILDING -APPROX. 20' X 40'
LAWN / SERVICE TURF AREAS (TYP.) -LAWN GAMES -UNIQUE PROPS (I.E. LARGE CHAIRS, SCULPTURES) -MOVEABLE SEATING
PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION TO SCHOOL PARKING LOT - ADDS CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING PARK SPACE
EXISTING RETAINING WALL
EXISTING PARKING
BOLLARDS
CONTINUE STREETSCAPE ENTIRE WAY FROM MAPLE TO CRESCENT STREET
RAISED CROSS WALK -RE-USE GRANITE STRIPS
NEW ALIGNMENT OF MAPLE AVENUE - MIN. 22' WIDE & CONTINUE W/ ONE-WAY
MAIN STASE
9 PARKING SPACES
4 PARKING SPACES
ONE-WAY VEHICULAR ENTRY
LANDSCAPED AREAS (TYP.)
RAISED CROSS WALK -POSSIBLY RE-USE GRANITE STRIPS
- SIGNAGE OR STATEMENT PIECE OF LOCAL ARTWORK TO MARK GROVE SPACE
SHADE SAIL POSTS (TYP.)
SHADE SAILS
RAISED CROSS WALK
REST PATIO AREA - WITH 4'-0" HT. FENCE/ GATE
UNDER EXISTING GROVE OF TREES - LOVE OPEN FOR VENDORS TO SETUP TENTS & TABLES FOR CRAFT FAIRS, GREEN MARKETS & OTHER EVENTS
REST PATIO AREA - WITH 4'-0" HT. FENCE/ GATE
VEHICULAR EXIT
- SIGNAGE OR STATEMENT PIECE OF LOCAL ARTWORK TO MARK GROVE SPACE
ALLEYWAY
- ARTWORK ON SIDES OF BUILDINGS/ MURALS
- UNIQUE PAVING PATTERN
- LIGHTING
- SIGNAGE OR STATEMENT PIECE OF LOCAL ARTWORK TO MARK GROVE SPACE
MAIN STREET

Sycamore Grove Final Concept Plan. Source: City of Brockton

Diagnostic

Sycamore Grove is a repurposed former bus terminal in downtown Brockton that is being transformed into a vibrant public space for live music and outdoor dining. The project grew out of the need for public space and additional amenities to make downtown an attractive location for residents and businesses alike. COVID has made the need for public space even more pressing. Using a recent $165,000 MassDOT Shared Streets grant, Brockton has made limited improvements that support outdoor dining and temporary improvements to support pop-up entertainment and community events. PROVA! operated a pop-up garden at Sycamore Grove in summer 2021, but this temporary arrangement was a subtenant of a larger vision. A management plan and entity is needed to manage, program, and fill the space for the longer-term.

PROVA! at Sycamore Grove. Source: PROVA! Facebook Page

Action Items

Identify a program model that translates the desires of the community and the physical opportunities presented by the Sycamore Grove site into a set of experiences and activities for visitors. This will guide and shape the ongoing staffing, events, activities, and temporary structures within Sycamore Grove. While the design of the space is critical, much is also determined by ongoing operations.

Develop and issue an RFP for program management. Program management can be supported by a specialized outside entity or an individual. There are options where this person represents a third-party organization that is funded by a collective of involved entities.

Process

Identify funding and issue the RFP for a management plan and entity to manage, program, and fill Sycamore Grove. The Program Management RFP should include the following considerations:

- Fundraising - Raising funds to support the programming, seeking out partnerships, sponsorships and grant funds to support programming and activating the space.
- Salary - Have the program manager/entity bring in the money to produce the events - but not to pay for their own salaries. This will ensure a higher level of skills to support building the structure, relationships, and efficiencies needed to do this work well long term. This model also supports continuity that is valuable in maintaining the relationships built and creating a central known contact to cultivate the experience of this place over time.
- Revenue Generation - This space has the potential to provide a venue for organizations within the community. This can add additional funds to the programming budget, or support offsetting costs and overhead such as funds for this role/entity.
- FTE – If program management is supported by an individual, it should be at least a .75 FTE position that scales up in hours over the summer, but is in place year-round for planning, implementation, and ongoing relationship management.
- Scale & Frequency - Consider the scale and frequency of the events they have produced before. Having a clear vision for how many you are looking to produce will support right sizing the RFP. Layering a combination of event styles can support a variety of experiences, relationships, and pilots to gauge interest. The frequency as well as the proper mix of events is something that is supported by community feedback, partner engagement, and funding streams as well as the capacity of this role.
- Communications - Social Media, marketing, writing, and a good eye for design are helpful in this role being able to create supportive materials to attract sponsors, solicit press coverage, and support community engagement in the digital space.
- Community Relationships - Established relationships can be a boon to early programming. Being able to leverage connections they already have within the community supports the ability to bring events to scale more easily than someone who needs to build relationships at the same time.
- Measuring Success - Having clear measurements of success will support finding the right candidate for this work, such as:
    1. Produce two signature level events within the first year
    2. Grow community association partnerships
    3. Build buy in and engagement with area restaurants
    4. Continue to build the relationship with PROVA! organizers and build on their success
    5. Develop two key sponsor relationships

PROVA! at Sycamore Grove. Source: PROVA! Facebook Page

The Musicant Group SME Consultation for Brockton Sycamore Grove Memo within the Plan Appendix includes important program management RFP considerations and guidance for developing the program model.

Best Practice

Winter Activation at the Panoway in Downtown Wayzata

ADMIN CAPACITY

Location

Linear lakefront park within downtown Wayzata, MN

Source: The Musicant Group (SME Consultant)

Wayzata is a lakefront main street community located 15 miles west of Minneapolis, MN long known as a destination for shopping and dining. A major challenge that the downtown has faced for decades is that while the single-sided main street looks out over Lake Minnetonka, there lies a parking lot and active freight railway that cut off access between the two. Through years of effort, the 2-block long parking lot was converted into a linear park – the Panoway – which opened in the late summer of 2020. As the effects of COVID were increasingly felt by the community and the retailers, the city and chamber saw the newly opened space as a strategic features to help drive customer traffic downtown during the coldest months of the year.

In order to remain responsive and iterative with the changing COVID-19 landscape, a gradual implementation plan was adopted that focused on providing a variety of activities within regularly scheduled times and serving the needs of the community members already present, while building to safe in-person gatherings for signature events.

Key Players: The Musicant Group + Wayzata Chamber of Commerce with funding from the City of Wayzata and the Panoway Conservancy

Budget: $90,000 covering larger events, weekly programming, physical improvements, project management and staffing

Timeframe: Planning: Nov - Dec 2020 | Implementation: Jan - Mar 2021

Partners & Resources: Small businesses and community organization partnerships to co-produce events. City provision of bathrooms, storage, snow removal, site care, and Christmas trees. These partnerships unlocked a significant increase in possible programming and expanded of the impact from a one-time site activation to a series that would impact traffic in downtown overall.

Best Practice

The Corner Spot

ADMIN CAPACITY

Location Ashland, MA

The Corner Spot
https://thecornerspotashland.com

The Corner Spot is a place in downtown Ashland where businesses can test-drive their market and residents can come together. This space was created as a shared, sustainable community gathering place and incubator for pop up businesses. The Corner Spot is intended to stimulate economic activity, attract new developers and business owners, and increase foot traffic downtown to help support existing and future business.

The Corner serves as the home for new businesses to "pop up" every week (or more), allowing residents to enjoy a variety of potential additions to the Ashland business community. Local sponsors provide donations for upkeep and donate equipment or other amenities for the space. The Corner Spot is run by a volunteer committee and organized by the Town Economic Development Director.

The Corner Spot is a small park space with a shed / bathroom that is open from dawn to dusk, and wifi is available. The rental fee to use the space is $100 a week to cover utility and other costs. Residents can also rent the space for the day for $50 (outdoor use) or $100 (use of the 300 SF indoor space with bathroom).

Increase City Planning Staff Capacity to Perform Planning and Economic Development Functions

Category	Admin Capacity
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Diagnostic phase findings, City of Brockton staff, and stakeholder engagement (Black Owned Brockton representative)
Budget	High Budget - Funds will be required to support staffing on an ongoing basis
Timeframe	Short-Term (< 5 Years). ARPA funding only an option through December 31, 2024.
Risk	Medium Risk – expansion of the City's planning staff requires significant commitments of funding over the long-term, which can only be achieved through strong political support.
Key Performance Indicators	Number of planning and economic recovery projects/initiatives implemented annually; Number of Planning & Economic Development staff; Increase in # of businesses in downtown
Partners & Resources	Typically, most planning department staff salaries are funded through the municipal general fund. That said, there are a few alternatives, as described in some of the examples below, that can provide some funding for specific functions or positions within the department.

Funding Options

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
The Interim Final Rule (IFR) for ARPA includes several provisions that appear to allow for the use of such funds to cover the cost of municipal staff, but only for the period of time ending on December 31, 2024. Section 35(6)(b) of the Act addresses the impacts of the pandemic to local governments and the related rehiring of staff. The IFR refers to reductions in staffing that undermine the ability to deliver services effectively.[1] Thus, the IFR includes as an eligible use payroll, covered benefits, and other costs associated with rehiring public sector staff, up to the pre-pandemic staffing level of the government.[2] Sections 602(c)(1)(C) and 603(c)(1)(C) of the Act allow recipients facing budget shortfalls to use payments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds to avoid cuts to government services and, thus, enable local governments to continue to provide valuable services and ensure that fiscal austerity measures do not hamper the broader economic recovery. [3]

City of Lynn
Before 2019, Lynn did not have a planning department. Rather, planning functions were scattered throughout line agencies of the city government and quasi-public agencies such as the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation of Lynn (EDIC). When creating the new Planning Department in 2020, the City first hired a Principal Planning Director, and then an Assistant Planning Director, and most recently an Arts and Culture Planner. In addition to funding from the general fund, the planning positions were funded in part by EDIC, at least for a limited amount of time.

[1] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-10283/p-130
[2] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-10283/p-163
[3] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-10283/p-247

Diagnostic	Brockton's Department of Planning & Economic Development is the lead agency responsible for all phases of planning in the city of Brockton and assists the Mayor and the City Council with public policy information and analysis. It is currently comprised of three full-time planners, the Director of Planning and Economic Development, Senior Planner/Conservation Agent, and Administrative Assistant. Additionally, the City is seeking to fill two additional slots (Assistant Planner and a Senior Economic Development Planner) The department has limited staffing, especially when considering the size of Brockton (population of 98,985) and the scale of redevelopment in the downtown currently underway, which impacts the ability of the City to carry out additional planning and redevelopment efforts. It has been well-documented that local planning and governance are increasingly challenged by fiscal and staffing constraints, which often leads to more reactive approaches to planning. COVID has exacerbated this issue and brought to light a real need to add staff capacity to the department in order to ensure continued high-quality planning and redevelopment efforts in downtown Brockton. Given that Brockton's planning functions are already understaffed (especially when compared with comparable cities in MA), the City will continue to face an uphill challenge in its economic recovery efforts without adequate resources and staff capacity.
Action Item	**Identify staffing needs to carry out planning and economic recovery efforts and develop job description(s) for additional staff.** Recruitment for available positions will be more successful if there is a standard format for job descriptions, especially if multiple job postings are made available concurrently. It is noted that for some positions, Brockton imposes a residency requirement. While it is understood that such a policy has its pros and cons, the City may want to consider whether such a requirement limits the pool of potential applicants. **Other Key Considerations:** • Funding to support a position long-term. If city funding is not available, consider alternative opportunities such as college-level internships/fellowships or shared positions with regional planning agency. • Ensuring position provides fair and equitable distribution of time/resources for all responsibilities. • Setting expectations too high or being unrealistic with responsibilities allocated to staff positions. • Managing competing goals/expectations and maintaining ongoing and continued communication between staff, stakeholders, businesses, etc.
Process	1. **Identify Funding and Successfully Advocate for the Creation of Position(s).** Once funding is identified, the creation of a position should be recommended by the Mayor and be approved by the City Council. 2. **Formalize Job Description(s):** The City should create a job description detailing the responsibilities of each position. The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) has researched job descriptions nationally. Not all organizations dedicated to planning issues will offer employment at all levels. These summaries give relevant background information on a classification. Typical functions, knowledge, skills and qualifications will vary depending on the hiring organization. AICP posts sample job descriptions for a variety of planning positions that can serve as a guide for a consistent approach for posting available positions (see https://www.planning.org/jobdescriptions/). 3. **Initiate the Hiring Process.**

Foster an Equitable Small Business Technical Assistance Network

Category	Admin Capacity
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Stakeholder Engagement (Black Owned Brockton representative & Brockton Redevelopment Authority representative)
Budget	Medium Budget
Timeframe	Short-Term (< 5 Years)
Risk	Low Risk - In general, support for helping small businesses recover and grow after COVID is at an all-time high. Work in this space has the capacity to receive a high level of support and public will. Enhanced services would require additional investment, but work in this area can be launched with few upfront financial resources.
Key Performance Indicators	Total services and referral partners; Capital access (loan and grants awarded); Jobs created/retained
Partners & Resources	Brockton Mayor's Office, Brockton Redevelopment Authority (BRA), Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC), Metro South Chamber of Commerce, Black Owned Brockton (BOB), Cape Verdean Association of Brockton, Inc., Haitian Community Partners, MassHire, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network's Southeast Regional Office Existing Resource: City of Brockton's "Open for Business" Initiative Potential Funding Sources: MA Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program (if the lead entity is a non-profit like BOB); Grassroots Seed Grant (private)

Diagnostic

Brockton is a very diverse community. According to the 2020 Census data, Brockton's white population dropped by 29 percent from the 2010 census, while the Black population increased by 26 percent, the percentage of the population identifying as Hispanic or Latino grew by 36 percent and the mixed-race population increased by 236 percent. Furthermore, the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy, affiliated with UMASS Boston, estimated in 2018 that Brockton's population was 27 percent foreign born, which would be over 25,000 residents. Brockton is home to growing communities from Haiti and various African nations, as well as from Cape Verde.

Stakeholders interviewed during the diagnostic phase identified a gap in business information for immigrant and minority populations and a need to make information more accessible. COVID-19 made this gap more evident. The City of Brockton launched the "Brockton Open for Business" initiative in Spring 2021 in conjunction with the Brockton Redevelopment Authority to help business owners recover from the pandemic. This project recommendation seeks to build upon this initiative and momentum to ensure that business assistance is equitable.

Action Item

Identify, engage, and coordinate technical assistance partners and organizations that could advise on challenges small businesses are experiencing and technical assistance solutions, with a focus on equity and inclusion specifically for Immigrant and Black-Owned businesses. A key component of the work will be gaining the commitment of organizations to ongoing collaboration.

Structure and organize technical assistance partners around key themes, among them: financing and grants, pandemic operating and regulatory support, marketing/social media, e-commerce, reengineering business offerings and operations, and legal support.

Create a business intake portal, ideally through an existing platform so as to not incur any additional investment. Assign staff to manage incoming businesses and volunteer signups and assess and refer businesses to technical assistance partners.

Share information on the program and support street-level outreach to Immigrant and Black-Owned businesses, particularly those in retail, hospitality, and services.

Review business intake weekly; conduct phone consultations, make appropriate referrals, conduct follow up, and direct businesses to additional services as needed.

Process

Some of the following steps are being undertaken through the "Brockton Open for Business" initiative. The initiative has the goal of making it easier to do business in Brockton through regulatory and policy adjustments, the introduction of new technology and best practices to help local businesses work with city departments, and the hiring of new staff members who are focused on recovery operations. This project recommendation is intended to complement important collaborative efforts already underway in Brockton.

1. Identify lead partner with available resources (staff time, technology, sufficient public-private networks) to initiate building a collaboration, leading meetings, developing a small business resource pipeline, and coordinating business outreach and neighborhood engagement. The BRA's Business Assistance Manager has been engaged in similar efforts through the "Brockton Open for Business" initiative.

Process Continued

2. Identify organizations to collaborate with that have resources to lend – staff, expertise in small business technical assistance, language services (interpretation and translation), business outreach, infrastructure, technology, social media reach.

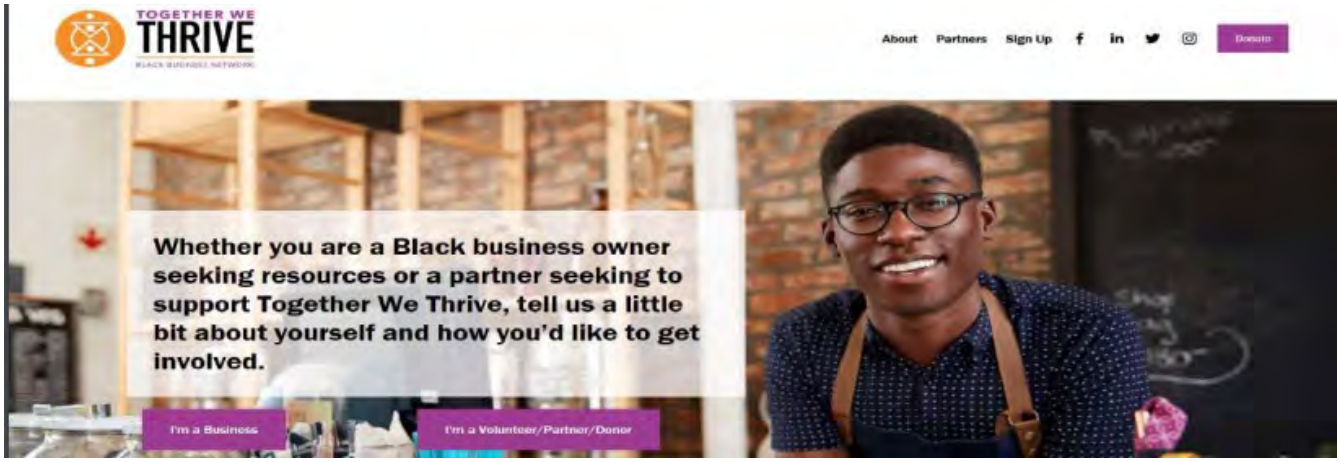
3. Formally create coalition – set parameters of engagement, project goals and milestones, meeting schedule, project management processes.

4. Organize available business services and define how they apply to Immigrant and Black-Owned businesses.

5. Identify high priority needs through engagement – surveys, door to door outreach, partner interviews. The Brockton Open for Business began undertaking this type of engagement since June 2021. Given Brockton's demographics, language barriers must be addressed for equitable engagement.

6. Create marketing and outreach strategy; create business intake that aligns with needs identified and service offerings.

7. Engage organizations that reach Immigrant and Black-Owned businesses and conduct street-level outreach.


TOGETHER WE
THRIVE
About
Partners
Sign Up
Whether you are a Black business owner seeking resources or a partner seeking to support Together We Thrive, tell us a little bit about yourself and how you'd like to get involved.
I'm a Business
I'm a Volunteer/Partner/Donor

*Together We Thrive is a coalition that provides access to capital, social networks, and technical assistance to support the survival, success and sustainability of Black-owned Businesses. Source: **https://www.togetherwethrivenyc.org/***

Best Practice

“Made in Baltimore” Program

ADMIN CAPACITY

Location Baltimore, MD

A Model for Diversifying Economic Opportunity

https://madeinbaltimore.org/

“Made in Baltimore” supports makers and manufacturers in Baltimore City, connecting businesses to the tools they need to grow, create jobs, and strengthen our the economy. To address issues around entrepreneurial inequity, the City of Baltimore launched the “Made in Baltimore” program to grow the market for locally produced goods and support the people who make them. The City reached out to existing entrepreneurial organizations and individuals to build a network of local businesses that represents the city’s demographic diversity.

In Summer of 2015, a network of makers and makerspaces called the Industrial Arts Collective (IAC) ran the first ‘Made In Baltimore Pop-Up Shop’ in Baltimore’s Station North neighborhood. The shop featured products by over 80 Baltimore City-based businesses, with the mission of offering Baltimoreans an easy opportunity to buy locally made products all in one place. It was so well-received, the organizers knew they needed to build on the momentum.

A year and a half later, IAC co-organizer Andy Cook founded The Made In Baltimore (MIB) Program at the Baltimore Office of Sustainability. The central feature of the program allowed businesses to use the MIB logo on their product packaging. This ‘local branding’ let shoppers know they were supporting a local business, and helped build public awareness of the importance of ‘buying local’.

While the mission and team have grown and evolved, MIB’s goals have remained the same: support local manufacturers, grow living wage jobs, and inspire pride in the city through a thriving local economy. In 2018, Made in Baltimore became a program of the Baltimore Development Corporation, a 501(c)(3) organization.

Best Practice

Launch an Equitable Technical Assistance Network for COVID Pandemic Relief and Beyond

Location	New York City
Provided by SME Consultant	Jeanette Nigro, Principal – Perch Advisors LLC

Key Partners and Resources

Led by: United Way of New York City in partnership with Perch Advisors, Hester Street (Community Development NFP), MoCaFi (FinTech), Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (CDFI and CDC) – With technical support from PACE Small Business Development Center, New York City Department of Small Business Services and in partnership with local and national CDFI's such as LISC and TruFund

Budget

Program's current budget – High ($200K+)
Program was launched with only in-kind support and technical assistance services

Timeframe

Short Term (Less than 5 years) – Program was planned and launched in under 9 months

Project Origin and Launch

This project was launched in response to the lack of coordinated support to inform and reach NYC Black-Owned businesses on available technical assistance and loan and grant programs to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Without immediate resources available at the start of the pandemic, the lead partner -- United Way of New York City (UWNYC) -- quickly identified resources that were no-cost or already offered through their programs, and collaborative partners who would be willing to contribute time and knowledge to reach and help Black owned businesses.

By leveraging its wide reach of vendors, community and neighborhood-based organizations, and corporate partners, the UWNYC was able to pull together a collaboration of 8 organizations in under 3 weeks. The partners agreed to share information, resources, and networks and meet weekly to plan and develop the program including marketing and outreach strategy, technical assistance programming, and business intake, referrals and follow up.

In the following months, a comprehensive clearing house and network of technical assistance providers were built; a website with business intake forms to identify specific needs and priorities of Black businesses was launched, and a triage and referral process for businesses was created, with United Way of New York City managing and tracking businesses and technical assistance providers throughout the process.

Additional volunteer partners and technical providers were continually added to the collaboration to improve the range of services and supports to Black-owned businesses. The program continues to market support to businesses and seeks to build out community peer to peer business networks in 2021 to further support Black businesses at the neighborhood level.

More information: https://www.mass.gov/doc/admin-capacity-best-practice-sheets-compendium/download (see page 44).

Establish a District Management Entity

Category	Administrative Capacity
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Rapid Recovery Program Grant Application; Stakeholder Engagement
Budget	Medium Budget ($50,000 - $200,000) – Staff/consultant time to manage district management entity formation process and community engagement; Eventual costs for staff and entity programming will be higher and ongoing
Timeframe	Short Term (<5 years) – BID formation is feasible in 18-24 months
Risk	Medium Risk – Long-term sustainability is critical including maintaining staff, a clear budget and scope, and ongoing district support
Key Performance Indicators	# Businesses/Property Owners Participating; Program Scope and Budget; MOU between District Management Entity and City
Partners & Resources	City of Brockton, Downtown Brockton Association, Black Owned Brockton, Downtown property owners, Brockton Police Department Funding Sources: or ARPA funds (if tied to implementing COVID recovery activities), Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, and MassDevelopment Real Estate Technical Assistance Program. Possibility of using Marijuana Host Community Impact payments to match BID funds.
Diagnostic	The COVID pandemic significantly impacted downtown businesses. Business surveys have verified that downtown small businesses, dining, cultural attractions, residential developments, and tourist destinations experienced loss of employment, revenue, customer base and foot traffic. Downtowns with active downtown organizations were able to pivot and respond to this crisis to help their small businesses weather the storm. Many downtowns have realized that a sustainable district management entity is positioned to help downtowns recover from COVID and prepare for the future. Through the Rapid Recovery Planning process, Brockton stakeholders have identified improvements in safety and cleanliness, as well as streetscapes and building facades, among their top strategies to help the district recover from and thrive after COVID. The City of Brockton was resource-challenged to manage downtown core activities prior to the pandemic, but the public health crisis has exacerbated operational and capital funding needs throughout the City. A district management entity will provide sustained resources that are needed for maintenance of public spaces and enhanced public safety. The Downtown Brockton Association (DBA) has recently been reinvigorated with the arrival of a new, interim president. DBA is poised to serve as a key leader in implementing this recommendation.

Action Items

While various downtown management entities are available and should be explored, **Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)** are emphasized in this recommendation because they include mechanisms to sustain funding for the entity.

Getting Started - Use the Rapid Recovery Planning process and project recommendation to form a district management entity as the launching point for stakeholder engagement.

Develop the Value Proposition/Communication - It will be essential to develop the value proposition for investing human capital and the financial resources into a BID and communicate to the City and private stakeholders the impact of their investment. The long-term goal of a BID is to build a destination that is attractive to potential developers, businesses, residents, and visitors. In the near term, a BID can play an important role in COVID recovery. A separate recommendation in this plan is to **Pilot the Downtown Ambassadors Program to ensure a clean, green, and safe downtown.** This pilot can serve as a proof of concept to demonstrate value for BID services.

Stakeholder Engagement/ Leadership and Partnerships - Launching the organizational efforts to form a BID in Brockton should be an intentionally inclusive process that welcomes new as well as long term property and business owners, volunteer organizations, City, and other key downtown stakeholders to develop the organizational and leadership infrastructure to be successful. The goal of this effort would be to form a strong, diverse, and inclusive steering committee to guide the development of a BID in Brockton, identify key champions and build a solid coalition around the concept. The City may convene this effort but should quickly transition to a private sector led working steering committee with strong public sector support. The clear demonstration of a public / private partnership will help move this effort forward.

Create a Community Outreach and Engagement Strategy - The Steering Committee should undertake efforts to engage media, businesses, property owners, nonprofits, cultural organizations, visitor attractions, volunteer groups, and interested residents to continue to identify and refine needs and priorities for the downtown.

Confirming BID Organizational Model - Once organizers have established the downtown priorities/ proposed supplemental programs and budget (existing work around the Downtown Ambassadors pilot could be a starting point), it will be important to confirm that there is consensus that a BID is appropriate for Brockton. Organizers should seek support letters / statements from key stakeholders.

Resources for Startup and Sustainability - Seed money is required to start a BID. Sources include TA through the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, MassDevelopment Real Estate Technical Assistance Program, or ARPA funds (if the development of the organization is tied to implementing COVID recovery activities). Additionally, local Institutions, foundations and key stakeholders/individual contributors may be sources for seed money to launch an effort to form a BID. Careful attention should be given to developing a realistic budget, and a variety of revenue opportunities for the organization. In addition to BID fees, additional sources to leverage BID revenue may include Marijuana Host Community Impact funds, sponsorships, event revenue, grants or contracts, foundations, and individual giving. If the Municipality approves the formation of a BID, property owners will reauthorize the organization every 5 years.

Alternatives to a Business Improvement District?

Consider a Voluntary Based Downtown Organization

An alternative to forming a BID may be to start building support for a downtown organization by forming a 501c3 to cultivate stakeholder involvement around the concept of creating a downtown organization. The community and stakeholder engagement process described at left would apply to identify priorities, budget, and revenue sources to begin the work of a downtown organization.

Management District Models

The specific Management District Model is determined by organizers in the community. There is no correct answer to this question, and organizers should explore which one has the best opportunity for success. The chart below briefly describes different models for consideration.

MANAGEMENT ENTITY	DISTRICT DELINEATION	REVENUE SOURCES
BIDS	Contiguous area within which property owners pay to develop, fund and execute supplemental services to benefit economic and social vitality of district	Self-sustaining through fees; reauthorized every 5 years, Grants and fundraising
VOLUNTARY DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATIONS	Volunteer program model addressing design, organization, promotion and economic vitality	Not self- sustaining; state grants, municipal contributions and fundraising
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS	Engages residents and businesses to undertake sustainable community development efforts in rural, urban and suburban. Geared to benefit low/moderate income.	Not self-sustaining; state grants, foundations and donations
PARKING BENEFIT DISTRICTS	Geographically defined district in which parking revenues are dedicated to related improvements. Can be a stand-alone or part of existing downtown organization.	Self-sustaining through parking revenue fees

Table Comparing Management District Models Source: Massachusetts Business Improvement Districts, A Guide for Establishing BIDs

BID Value Proposition: Key Talking Points

- Ability to collectively and cost effectively purchase priority supplemental programs and services to achieve impact /scale
- Provide a unified voice / "seat at the table" for district priorities
- Professional management and staff dedicated to implementing programs and services in the district.
- Produce and execute cultural and event programming
- Ability to respond to crisis - COVID
- Support new and existing businesses
- Leverage resources and build collaborations

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE SUPPORT IS NOT THERE?

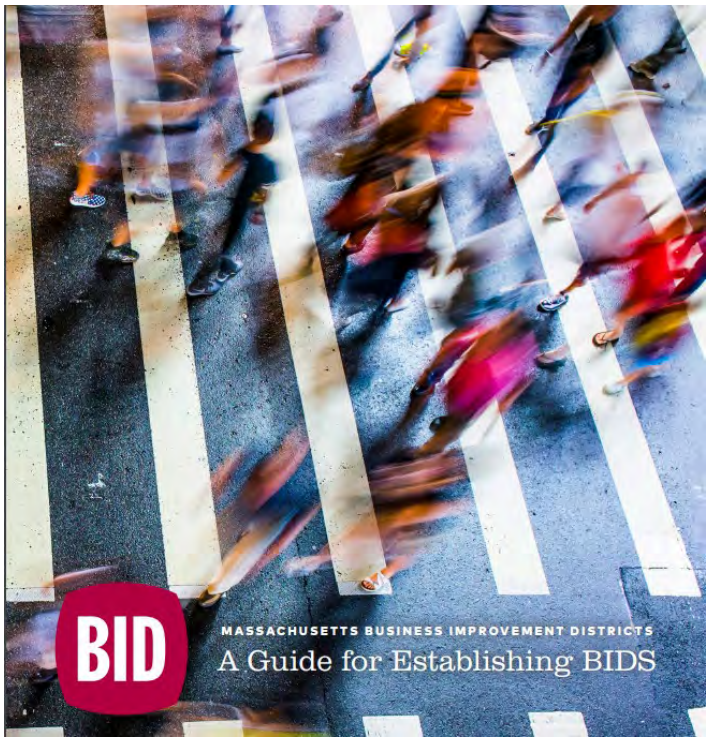
Sometimes the political or economic climate to form a BID does not currently exist. Organizers may need to continue to work with community development and neighborhood organizations, property owners and elected officials to build an environment that is more conducive to the development of a BID.

If it appears that there are property owners that have an interest but not a solid understanding of the concept, organizers may choose to begin this process as an "investigative" initiative to analyze the concept and educate the property owners in the district. Organizers may decide to consider interim steps with the long-term goal of forming a BID.

Tips on Stakeholder Support for Establishing BIDs *Source: Massachusetts Business Improvement Districts, A Guide*

Community Engagement Strategy Examples

- Community Forums - fun, engaging and informational visioning sessions held in accessible, approachable locations such as a local business, restaurant, park, libraries, or community gather space.
- Peer Learning Panels - Invite Executive Directors from BIDs in similar communities to present on the impact of their organizations.
- Visits to other communities with BIDs to see programs in action.
- Distribute surveys to a broad cross section of downtown stakeholders to identify needs and priorities.
- Focus groups with key interest groups
- Websites/social media.



Massachusetts Business Improvement Districts, A Guide for Establishing BIDs Source: MA DHCD; https://www.mass.gov/doc/2020-revised-business-improvement-district-manual/download

Process

The following process is recommended to build support for a BID in Brockton.

- Create property owner and business databases using information provided by the City as the official property owner database for the BID process and proposed boundaries.
- Confirm threshold for forming a BID is met.
- Create a downtown partnership with City, DBA, key property owners, new developers, key businesses, cultural and tourist destinations, residential groups, nonprofit, and Chamber of Commerce to launch the effort. Create list of potential Steering committee members.
- Form a broad-based advisory committee to provide input and feedback.
- Secure seed funding for TA for BID formation through Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (now part of the One Stop), Mass Development Real Estate TA program, ARPA, Foundations and other stakeholder support.
- Create community outreach events, widely distribute surveys, and utilize other engagement tools to develop program priorities.
- Hold Community forums on BID model.
- One on one conversations with stakeholders to secure support and engagement in process.
- Consensus building with stakeholders on BID model /programming /budget/fee structure.
- Create communication/marketing materials.
- Organizers may consider executing a demonstration project (e.g. Downtown Ambassadors pilot) that could "show" potential programs and services provided to the downtown through a BID. Possible funding sources may include MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places.
- Develop the BID Petition components.
- Develop MOU with City for support of BID.
- Develop petition signature campaign strategy, timelines, and benchmarks
- Basic outline of approval requirements: Undertake a petition process under direction of the steering committee to secure support of 60% of property owners representing, 51% of the assessed valuation of the district. The petition will include:
    - Map and legal description of BID boundaries,
    - BID improvement Plan - programs and services
    - Fee Structure
    - Budget
    - Hardship Provisions
    - ID Management
    - Property owner signatures of support
- Formal Local Legislative Approval - Public hearing and formal vote by City Council to
- establish the BID.
- Organizers complete 501c3 and Articles of Organization filings
- Approval of bylaws
- Establishment of a Board of Directors; hire staff.
- Initiation of supplemental services.
- Reauthorization by property owners every 5 years.

Downtown Ambassador in Worcester, MA Photo: Aviva Luttrell | MassLive.com

Photo examples of typical downtown BID services: arts/cultural programming, beautification, retail, and more. Source: Massachusetts Business Improvement Districts, A Guide for Establishing BIDs

Photos: Central Square (Cambridge) BID's facilitated "return to Central Square" marketing and event programming during COVID-19

Best Practice

Business Improvement District Case Studies

REVENUES & SALES

Location Hudson, Cambridge, Hyannis

Hudson, MA

THE BASICS

Organizational Model 501c3
Formally Authorized .....2017; Renewal, 2022
Budget $172,700
Revenue Sources .....BID fees, grants and events
Property Parcels .....120; Voting entities, 84
FEE FORMULA:
Property owners pay for the BID services based on the following fee formula:

- Commercial .....0.035% X assessed value
- Residential .....0.02% X assessed value
- Mixed-use .....Commercial – 0.035% X assessed value
  .....Residential – 0.02% X assessed value
- Nonprofits/Public.....Negotiated agreements/MOU

Size .....47.8 acres
2017 Vacancy Rate in BID 11%
2019 Vacancy Rate in BID 5%

https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_Hudson.pdf

Central Square (Cambridge, MA)

THE BASICS

Organizational Model 501c3
Formally Authorized ..... June 2019; Renewal, 2024
Budget $1,448,000
Sources: BID fees, grants, event revenue, contracts

Property Parcels ..... 98; Voting entities, 73

FEE FORMULA:
Commercial property owners pay for BID services on a formula determined by assessed value based on size, type and ownership.

Charitable, religious, educational, government and other properties exempt from taxation have a Memorandum of Understanding or other negotiated agreements. Residential properties are exempt from fee. (Refer to page 6 for a complete description of the fee formula.)

Size .....83 acres

Vacancy and Value
Vacancy Rate when formed in 2019 0.01%
2019 Assessed Value in BID $1,489,000,000

https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_CentralSquare.pdf

Hyannis, MA

THE BASICS

Organizational Model 501c6, 1999; 501c3
Community Development Corporation, 2019
Formally Authorized ..... 1999; Renewal, 2023
Budget $300,000
(Sources: BID fees, grants and event revenue)
Property Parcels ..... 110 votes, 133 properties

FEE FORMULA:
Property owners pay for BID services based on the following formula:

- All real properties are assessed at .003 percent X assessed value. Cap of $4,000 on any property.
- Residential and nonprofit properties are exempt from the fee.

Size: 82 acres

VACANCY AND VALUE
1999 Vacancy Rate in BID, 18%
2019 Vacancy Rate in BID, 5%
1999 Assessed Value in BID, $60,000,000
2019 Assessed Value in BID, $107,000,000

https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/BID/HowToCreateABID_2020_CaseStudy_Hyannis.pdf

Engage Property Owners and Attract Diverse Businesses Downtown to Promote Active Ground Floor Uses

Category	Tenant Mix
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Diagnostic phase findings; City of Brockton staff; Stakeholder engagement (Black Owned Brockton representative)
Budget	Medium Budget: Funds will be required to support staffing of the project on an ongoing basis
Timeframe	Medium Timeframe - The establishment of the project is short-term, however successful implementation will depend on other efforts underway to build the local market (e.g., housing units in the pipeline, public realm improvements, etc.)
Risk	High Risk - Even with a variety of financial subsidies, activation programs, and more staff technical support, it's uncertain how many 'brick and mortar' businesses are ready and willing to locate in downtown Brockton
Key Performance Indicators	Number of vacant storefronts filled with new tenants; SF of upper floor space brought onto market for residential or commercial uses; Number of new businesses and property owners using incentive programs
Partners & Resources	City of Brockton Planning & Economic Development Department; Brockton Redevelopment Authority; Metro South Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Brockton Association; Local property owners, developers, real estate professionals; and small businesses Existing Resources: • Downtown Building Activation Initiative (rent rebate) • Brockton Downtown Restaurant Infrastructure Fund (loan program) • Storefront Façade Improvement Program (interest-free loan program) • Massachusetts Vacant Storefront Program (MVSP) (tax incentive program) • District Improvement Financing (DIF) Potential Funding Sources: • ARPA • EDA funding for economic development and rebuilding • Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) • Minority and Women-Owned loan or grant programs

Key Risk Consideration

Improvements to the existing tenant mix are necessary in downtown Brockton, and retail recruitment is an important component of this longer-term strategy. However, retail recruitment is a complex process that requires strong capacity, expertise, and long-term commitment from a local organization, as well as a stable physical environment.

Diagnostic

The City has found it challenging to attract a more diverse mix of businesses to downtown. Hundreds of new housing units in mixed-use buildings are being added within the downtown core, which is incrementally building the local market, yet it has been difficult to attract first floor commercial tenants to those buildings. The city struggled to attract commercial tenants to downtown prior to COVID, but the new economic pressure of COVID renders it nearly impossible to secure tenant agreements for commercial space.

The diagnostic phase revealed an estimated 30 vacant storefronts in downtown Brockton, and this number has increased due to COVID-19. There is a variety of reasons for vacant storefronts including substandard physical spaces, but it was also observed that many owners currently do not advertise their vacant space and that small business owners are unable to find space that is up to code, which prevents them from establishing a presence downtown.

The number of vacancies combined with the overall goal of increasing vibrancy and foot traffic in downtown Brockton point to the importance of increasing the number of 'activating' small businesses such as coffee shops, retail, restaurants, and art/creative economy ventures. These themes came through during stakeholder interviews, with the need to do more to add businesses to downtown that provide active ground floor uses. Relatedly, there is a need for property owners to advertise, both on-site and online, that space is available for lease or sale to support and encourage more commercial activity in downtown area.

Action Item

The overall goal of this project recommendation is to fill vacant commercial space in downtown with active ground floor uses. To the extent possible, these efforts will attempt to include minority and women-owned small businesses to help downtown business ownership better reflect the actual demographics of Brockton.

This project recommendation has a two-pronged approach:

1. Engage commercial property owners to document and advertise vacancies
2. Create a marketing and promotion strategy to attract businesses downtown and encourage their utilization of existing incentive programs

Process

1. **Identify a lead entity to be responsible for property owner outreach.** Engage commercial property owners to document and advertise vacancies and encourage their utilization of existing incentive programs to assist with build-out costs and bringing their properties up to code.

2. **Develop a district profile summarizing the downtown Brockton market data**. The district profile is a commonly used marketing and communications tool that tells the story of the district. Many successful commercial districts around the country have used such tools to attract and retain businesses, customers, and also real estate and capital investments. In addition, the district profile can build a common understanding of the current conditions and help grow community buy-in. Often the district profile is made available to the public in digital or print formats. For Brockton, this district profile will be strengthened once housing units currently under construction or in the planning phase come online (see the Downtown Brockton Investments Map on page 17 of the Plan).

3. **Produce marketing materials to attract tenants to fill vacant commercial space.** Promote existing incentive programs such as the vacant storefront tax credit and Brockton Downtown Restaurant Infrastructure Fund loan program. In addition to the district profile, the marketing materials must:
    - Provide information about incentive programs and other resources for businesses to locate in downtown Brockton in an accessible and visually appealing format, for both electronic and hard copy distribution
    - Identify a single point of contact for questions and additional information about incentive programs (City of Brockton Department of Planning & Economic Development)

Create a Publicly Accessible Art Plan and Policy

Category	Cultural/Arts
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	Stakeholder engagement (community presentation attendee); City of Brockton; Downtown Brockton Green Space Plan
Budget	Medium Budget – see below
Timeframe	Short: 45 days from time of RFP issuance to negotiation of consultant contract (recommend 30 days from issuance of RFP to deadline for proposals); 7-9 months for planning process; Implementation will be ongoing (long-term)
Risk	Low: Requires political will and collaboration to ensure good capacity in terms of private and public entities for implementation and funding; Requires dedicated funding source / private investment strategies to achieve critical mass of publicly accessible art that will have an impact on the Downtown.
Key Performance Indicators	See Below
Partners & Resources	Partners: City of Brockton (Planning & Economic Development, Parks, Schools); TDI Partnership; Local property / business owners; Artists; Brockton Arts; Massachusetts Cultural Council

Budget and Sources of Funding

Budget:

- City staff time to write and finalize RFP, hire Consultant and oversee project
- Consultant fees:
  - Publicly Accessible Art Policy for Downtown: $50,000 - $75,000
  - Publicly Accessible Art Plan for Downtown: $60,000 - $90,000
- Interns to assist City with public art inventory for everything not covered in the Art Plan Scope ($15-$20 per hour) plus city staff time to oversee effort.

Sources of funding:

- Barr Foundation
- MassDevelopment Technical Assistance
- Mass Cultural Council
- MassDevelopment Commonwealth Places

Key Performance Indicators

- Creation of a Downtown Publicly Accessible Art Plan and Policy
- Identification of potential funders/partners
- Creation of a "next steps" action plan to get project up and running
- Adoption of Downtown Publicly Accessible Art Policy and Plan
- Creation of first publicly accessible art piece (temporary or permanent)
- Creation of public art map and guide of existing and new public art (temporary and new)
- Number of participants at any publicly accessible art events

Diagnostic

Public art can create a sense of place that helps people make meaning from their surroundings, and the act of generating artwork can build relationships in a community. Integrating public art into projects will therefore help generate community engagement and enhance the results of projects such as the planned transportation improvements in downtown Brockton. This is important to the recovery of the study area because art and culture are key to advancing planning and community development goals and objectives including:

- Enhancing the human experience in the public realm
- Celebrating community identity and culture
- Promoting positive community and civic engagement
- Promoting economic development and tourism
- Advancing civic design objectives for parks, plazas, open spaces, streetscapes, and other public infrastructure

As municipal budgets continue to be constrained, funds for art projects and routine maintenance of existing public art can be challenging. In response, many municipalities have looked for ways to align public art with other municipal and civic priorities. The lines between public art and emerging fields like socially engaged art and civic art are increasingly blurry—creating new opportunities and well as new challenges for planners who must balance competing municipal priorities. A publicly accessible art policy and plan will therefore help set the stage for effectively increasing the amount of publicly accessible art in downtown Brockton.

Action Item

Create a process to hire a consultant with specialization in publicly accessible art and create a publicly accessible art plan and policy that have wide-spread buy-in from City Hall and residents, businesses, and property owners in Brockton. After approval and adoption of the plan, implement the first steps to get the publicly accessible art plan up and running and use it for marketing and downtown business support.

Brockton is focused on publicly accessible art to acknowledge that much of the art in the public realm can be privately commissioned and/or supported and hosted on private land and in new development projects, allowing for greater capacity to achieve goals. In addition, one of the goals of the effort will be to incorporate a large-scale art infrastructure component in the Downtown Transportation Plan.

Mural tribute to Brockton's historic shoe industry on private building (89 Legion Parkway). Photo: BSC Group

Process

1. **Form a Downtown Publicly Accessible Art Committee (DPAAC)** of 11-15 members to guide / advise the City of Brockton on the planning process. The Committee should include:
   - City Planner and Economic Development staff (lead); Parks & Recreation staff member; DPW and Transportation staff members
   - TDI representative
   - Local business representatives; One or two major property owners in downtown
   - One or two area artists
   - Community foundation

   DPAAC roles should include:
   - Oversight of planning process
   - Feedback on community outreach strategy
   - Attendance at community outreach events
   - Ambassadors for the project
   - Feedback as Downtown stakeholders
   - Commitment to ongoing implementation and success of the Plan

2. **Issue RFP for consulting services for the Publicly Accessible Art Policy and Plan**

   Policy should include:
   - Purpose/goals/objectives of the Policy
   - Definition of Public Art and Publicly Accessible Art
   - Functions and legal duties of the City with respect to Public Art and Publicly Accessible Art
   - Public Art Policies (art owned by the City of Brockton – see below)
   - Publicly Accessible Art Policies (art on private property / owned privately that is viewable / accessible by the public – see below)

City-Owned Public Art Policies

- Legal requirements governing acquisition, including intellectual property issues
- Elements that must be included in any proposal for public art (e.g., rationale for acquisition, provenance, location/siting, full costs, insurance and security, maintenance, etc.)
- Performance space
- Requirements for public art in municipal development and infrastructure projects
- Funding mechanisms
- Loans and temporary installations
- Mechanisms for public input regarding proposals, such as public polls, and gathering the input of stakeholders.
- Identification of criteria to be considered in the review of any public art proposal
- Administrative process for review and decision
- Required elements of the City's contract with an artist
- Care and maintenance of the City's public art
- Policy on access to holdings
- Process required for deaccession and disposition
- Guidelines for documentation and oversight of current collection

Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Art Policies

- Official City strategies for incentivizing and encouraging publicly accessible art in new development
- Revising zoning regulations to include public art space considerations in projects, provide bonuses for provision of public art, requiring developer meetings with a new City Public Art Committee during permitting
- Policies for City partnerships with private entities for the funding, provision, maintenance of publicly accessible art
- Methods and policies for incorporating a “public art lens” on all State and Federal transportation, infrastructure, etc. projects. infrastructure (transportation, stormwater, lighting, etc.)
- Elements that must be included in any proposal for publicly accessible art (e.g., location, public access, maintenance, artist attribution, duration/longevity, transfer of ownership/obligations with sale)
- Mechanisms for public input on publicly accessible art proposals as part of permitting and development processes
- Guidelines for oversight and compliance with publicly accessible art policy

Plan should include:

- Principles and Vision
- Downtown Publicly Accessible Art Map and Inventory (including City Hall paintings and decorative elements)
- Criteria for location of publicly accessible art and accompanying map of opportunities and recommendations
- Opportunities and specific recommendations for current/planned/future public infrastructure projects including:
    - Downtown Transportation Plan Implementation:
        - Conceptualize up to five large scale public art opportunities including those using light, eco-art, and public space activation strategies to be included in the Downtown Transportation Plan Implementation project
        - Offer draft recommendations for RFPs for Public Art in the Transportation Plan.
    - Considerations for other City, State, Federally-funding projects:
        - Stormwater (opportunities for eco-art, landscape art, etc.)
        - Lighting and data installations (ensuring all work includes data and electrical and lighting in public spaces and selected roadways Downtown)
    - Implementation plan

3. **Review proposals, interview finalists (DPAAC can be interview committee), sign contract with consultant.**

4. **Support community outreach during the process (and build support for implementation) by preparing information for use by the consultant and/or DPAAC)**:
    - Using City Assessor data and business lists, contact building and property owners/managers, as well as businesses with information on the project and requests for interest from those who wish to provide a wall or spot for public art or to be involved in the project in some way (attend community meetings).
    - Inform business owners, property owners, tenant groups, and other Downtown stakeholders that surveys and meetings will be used to gather feedback and request in advance that they forward information on the project and feedback opportunities to their internal lists and through any newsletters or other contact they have.

5. **DPAAC to discuss criteria for publicly accessible art locations:**
    - Criteria should include:
        - Availability of wall, land, location and willingness of owner (public or private) to participate in program.
        - Visibility of location – first five murals should be in prominent locations.
        - Number of people passing by in cars or as pedestrians/cyclists for maximum impact.
        - Ability of location of artwork to ensure visitors are exploring downtown – scatter sites for subsequent public art in varied locations, including small areas. The goal is to entice visitors and residents to explore the downtown and frequent stores and restaurants. Consider movable murals on canvas for interior locations (Canvas is not a good choice for exterior locations as it will deteriorate quickly. For interior uses, it can help make choosing locations easier as it does not need permanent painting of walls).
        - Ability to connect murals and public art through a public art trail or treasure hunt.

6. **DPAAC and City to gather information for consultant to use as a baseline inventory and to create a map** of all public and publicly accessible art in Downtown (including art in City Hall and other City buildings that is regularly accessible to the public).

7. **DPAAC and City to meet regularly (bi-weekly or monthly) before and during the planning process** to coordinate work and support for consultant and oversee consultant work.

Mural on Mayor Bill Carpenter Garage. Source: BSC Group

Best Practice

Chicago Public Art Plan

CULTURAL/ ARTS

Location Chicago, IL

Chicago Public Art Plan Cover. Source: City of Chicago.

Public art has always been important to the City of Chicago, as evidenced in the ordinance that a portion of the cost of public buildings be set aside for installation of original public art. Announced by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Chicago's first Public Art Plan lays out seven goals that will help shape the future of public art in Chicago and shift how the city talks about and supports public art:

- Update Chicago's Percent for Art Program
- Establish clear and transparent governmental practices
- Expand resources to support the creation of public art throughout the city
- Advance programs that support artists, neighborhoods and the public good
- Strengthen the City's collection management systems
- Support the work that artists and organizations do to create public art
- Build awareness of and engagement with Chicago's public art

The field of public art is continually evolving and expanding to include expansive, interdisciplinary and embedded artwork. The Chicago Public Art Plan acknowledges this and establishes that the process of commissioning public art must welcome creativity in all of its forms and offer broad opportunities for participation. The plan is a means to advocate for a diverse public art ecosystem and to nurture art that has the potential to surprise, inspire, challenge and bring people together through shared experiences.

The city is focused on looking at new ways to fund new artwork and the maintenance of existing artwork. They have looked into alternative funding models as identified in other communities and organized a task force, and they continue to rally support from private entities, promote artful design in new development, and spur investment opportunities within the City.

Best Practice

Art in Public Places

CULTURAL/ ARTS

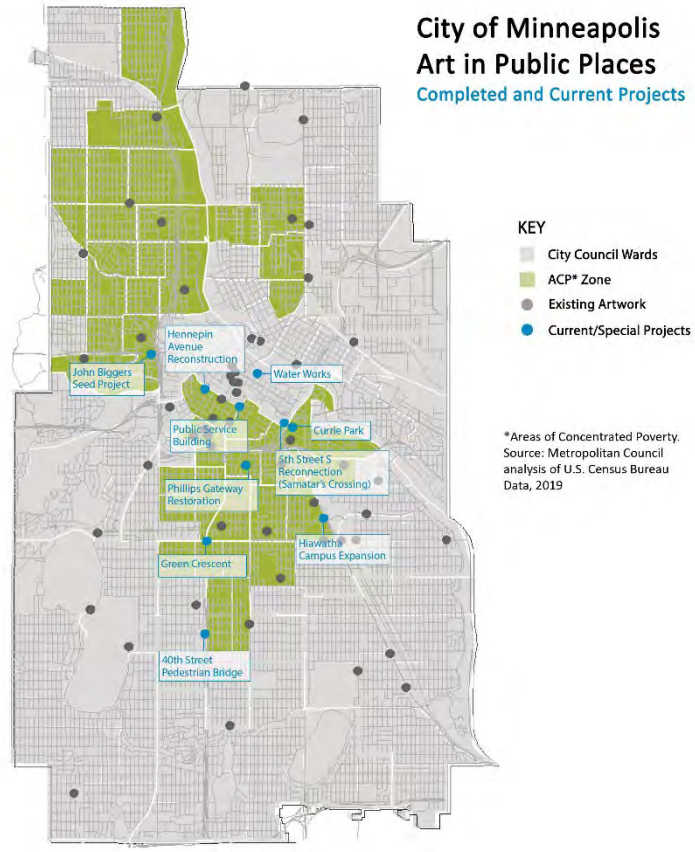
Location Minneapolis, MN

The City of Minneapolis has integrated public art into city planning, services, design and infrastructure by funding new commissions through the Art in Public Places Program with an annual allocation from the capital budget. Public artworks contribute to the livability and vibrancy of public places and build pride in community and cultural identity. The process of developing public artworks builds the capacity of artists and community members to shape city spaces and neighborhoods.

In addition to new commissions, the City's Public Art Program includes:

- A comprehensive maintenance and conservation effort
- Support to communities through a technical assistance and permitting program for proposed projects on City property and in the right of way
- Partnerships and assistance to other government entities, such as MNDOT and Hennepin County
- Updates to the City's comprehensive public art policies

Using an annual budget set aside by the city and a 25% match from sponsors, the program helps the city fund the selection and implementation of public art where it's needed most. The program focuses on community engagement, celebrating culture, and using resources wisely.



Art in Public Places Map *Source: City of Minneapolis*

Conduct a Performing Arts and Cultural Facility Feasibility Study

Category	Cultural/Arts
Location	Downtown Brockton | Census Tract 5109
Origin	City of Brockton
Budget	Medium Budget – Includes City staff time to write and finalize RFP, hire Consultant, and oversee project, as well as the Consultant fees
Timeframe	Short Timeframe - 45 days from time of RFP issuance to negotiation of consultant contract (recommend 30 days from issuance of RFP to deadline for proposals); 7-9 months for feasibility study; Implementation will be long-term
Risk	Low Risk for feasibility study
Key Performance Indicators	Creation of a Performing Arts and Cultural Facility Feasibility Report; Identification of potential funders/partners; Identification of a performing arts and cultural facility project; Creation of a "next steps" action plan to get project up and running
Partners & Resources	Partners: City of Brockton (Planning & Economic Development); Brockton Cultural Council; Brockton Redevelopment Authority; TDI Partnership; Local property / business owners; Artists; Brockton Arts; Massachusetts Cultural Council Funding Sources: ARPA; MA Office of Travel & Tourism; and Economic Development Administration (EDA)
Diagnostic	One of the longer-term challenges for downtown Brockton is encouraging pedestrian activity and promoting an active 18-hour downtown environment that supports local businesses. COVID-19 has made the need for increasing foot traffic in downtown Brockton even more acute as employees that once patronized local establishments began working remotely. Arts and cultural destinations bring visitors, who in turn create demand for other businesses, like restaurants, coffee shops, and stores. There were four theaters in downtown Brockton at one time – none of which exist today – and Brockton's other cultural venues have historically set up shop outside of downtown. The City of Brockton has identified attracting new performance venues and persuading existing cultural organizations to establish a presence downtown as a priority for drawing residents out of their homes and bringing visitors to the city. This effort has already seen some success, with the Milton Art Museum joining the Brockton Arts' downtown presence at 50 Center Street in 2020. An arts and cultural facility feasibility study will help identify opportunities to bolster these efforts.

Action Item

Create a process to hire a consultant or firm to study the feasibility of developing new performing arts and cultural facilities within downtown Brockton**.** Arts and cultural facilities include space for performance art (drama, musical theater, acoustic music, and dance), exhibition space, studio/classroom space, rehearsal space, and administrative offices. This study will provide information to assist in deciding if further steps should be made towards developing an arts and cultural center and if so what that development might look like (i.e. a single large center, several smaller centers, etc.). The study can be divided into two phases:

- **Phase I** - Evaluate demand for new performing arts and cultural facilities in Brockton, verifying audience potential, identifying potential users and uses, confirming its positioning within a competitive market, and considering how new performing arts and cultural facilities might support the broader goals of the City and region.
- **Phase II** - Develop basic plans, cost estimates and operating projections for recommended facilities if the result from Phase I is positive.

Process

1. **Form a Performing Arts and Cultural Facilities Study Committee (Study Committee)** of 7-10 members to guide / advise the City of Brockton on the planning process. The Committee should include:
    - City Planner and Economic Development staff (lead)
    - TDI representative
    - Local business representatives
    - Professionals associated with the arts, tourism and hospitality industries
    - Community foundation(s)

    Study Committee roles should include:
    - Oversight of planning process
    - Assist in proposal review and consultant selection
    - Help guide development of the study as it progresses

Process (continued)

2. **Issue RFP for consulting services for the Performing Arts and Cultural Facility Feasibility Study.**

   The Scope of Work should include:

   - Interview stakeholders, and meet with the local officials, community leaders, and others as appropriate.
   - Bring knowledge of performing arts facility operations and an understanding of the demand for various sized facilities within a regional context.
   - Evaluate the economic and demographic aspects of Brockton and the city's position as a regional performing arts destination.
   - Profile the Performing Arts industry and discuss changes and trends affecting existing and potential facilities.
   - Conduct a review of existing facilities in the Greater Brockton Marketplace, their performance and implications for new arts and cultural facilities.
   - Summarize key demand generator trends and comment on the overall growth prospects for the market to provide a realistic assessment of the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
   - Understanding the competitive market, make recommendations regarding significant facets of any recommended facilities, including:
     - Location.
     - Number, size, quality and type of performance spaces (small theater, rehearsal space, amphitheater, reception space, dressing rooms, and other needs), based on optimal event footprints.
     - Whether facility rental fees and ticket sales will be able to sustain the venue if it is built.
     - Required amenities that may be necessary to accommodate the facility which may involve public and or private participation (i.e., parking facilities, pedestrian access, on-site food vendors, etc.).
     - Description of how the Market Capture Rate was arrived at.
     - Marketing and operational approaches to maximize event and revenue activity. This should include a discussion of public and private management of performing arts center activities.
   - Forecast market demand, including demand by market segment/type of event for the proposed facility for a ten-year period, as well as demand projections addressing the number of events, number of event days, number of attendees, and the amount of space to be utilized.
   - Provide a financial projection based on the projection of demand and applying a number of assumptions regarding performing arts event rates and other factors.
   - Provide preliminary development cost estimate(s).

3. **Review proposals, interview finalists (Study Committee can be interview committee), sign contract with consultant.**

4. **Study Committee and City to meet with the consultant to confirm goals of the study and other contextual issues related to the project.**

5. **Study Committee and City to meet regularly (bi-weekly or monthly) before and during the planning process** to coordinate work and support for consultant and oversee consultant work.

Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study

CULTURAL/ ARTS

Location Nashua, NH

Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study (Nashua, NH)

https://www.nashuanh.gov/1142/Performing-Arts-Center-Feasibility-Study

In September 2015, the City of Nashua Mayor's Office of Economic Development issued a Request for Proposals seeking proposals from professional consultants to study the feasibility of developing a new Cultural and Performing Arts Center within Downtown Nashua. The services sought included the evaluation of programming needs, the development of project feasibility, review of specific sites, and assistance with project next steps. Webb Management Services, Inc., of New York, was selected to conduct the study. After consulting with Webb Management, the City chose to break out the work into two phases, with two separate contracts. The Phase I contract evaluated demand for a new performing arts facility in Nashua, verified audience potential, identified potential users and uses, confirmed its positioning within a competitive market, and considered how new performance facilities might support the broader goals of the City and region.

In the Fall of 2016, the Economic Development Division and a special working group of Alderman and stakeholders in the arts community began working with Webb Management on the development of a Phase II Feasibility study for development of a new the Nashua Performing Arts Center in Downtown Nashua. This deeper exploration of feasibility was a follow-up to the Phase I feasibility study which was completed in 2016. The Phase I study made recommendations for establishment of a new arts district as well as the creation of a new 500-700 seat performing arts venue in Downtown.

In January 2017, Webb Management presented "Project Comparisons" or precedents for a venue in collaboration with sub-consultant Bruner/Cott Architects and their presentation of the "Concept Design & Planning Study". In February 2017 Webb Management presented their "Performing Arts Facility Business Plans" to a working group of arts organizations, civic leaders, and other stakeholders. The business plans provided the framework for the arts community to select a direction for further exploration of an arts center venue. The work of Webb Management came to a close in May of 2017 when they presented their recommendation for establishing a new Performing Arts Venue. The final report from Webb Management (see links below) provides significant detail on the exploration of sites, business models, financial planning, and economic impacts of a new venue which led to the final recommendation.

Feasibility Reports by Webb Management

- 20170502_Webb-Mgmt_Final-Report_Exec-Summary
- 20170502_Webb-Mgmt_Final-Report_Need-Assessment
- 20170502_Webb-Mgmt_Final-Report_BOA-Presentation
- 20170502_Webb-Mgmt_Final-Report_Neilsen-Data
- 20170502_Webb-Mgmt_Final-Report_Econ-Impacts

Appendix

September 17th, 2021

SELBERT PERKINS DESIGN

Local Rapid Recovery Plan

Best Practices & Recommendations; Branding

Town of Brockton

LRRP – Branding for Towns & Cities

This guide has been developed by Selbert Perkins Design for use in completing Project Rubrics assigned by the Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP). The goal of the document is to elaborate on best practices, deliverables, & process in relation to any branding development under the DCHD's LRRP Program.

SELBERT PERKINS DESIGN

The Process of Developing a Brand

1. Identify Key Players

Developing a brand for your town or city is a bold undertaking – one that requires a few standard elements to ensure a successful outcome. We'll start with identifying key players:

- The Design Firm/Studio is the group contracted to complete the work. They can provide the town/city with pricing proposals before officially contracted for work, and once signed to the project will complete the deliverables and be a valuable partner following completion of the brand project moving forward.
- A Brand Project Manager or Communications Lead will be a representative on the town/city side of managing the project as it develops, and then evolve into directing staff to the correct usage or files, and maintaining the brand standards. This person should be at every meeting.
- Stakeholders are key members of the community or staff that will have a larger impact when it comes to decisions. They should be included when the Design firm requests their input.
- Constituents are residents of the town/city and should be considered along the entire process, but invited for opinion only at key milestones. Too much feedback can be detrimental to the process.

LRRP – Branding for Towns & Cities

2. Develop an RFP

The first step in the process of branding for any town/city is developing a Request for Proposals, or an RFP. This document serves as an important baseline for the project, identifying a timeline, budget, stakeholders, goals and deliverables for the branding exercise.

Design firms will respond to your RFP with proposals for no fee. If your town/city intends to apply for grants through the LRRP program for your branding project, the project rubric outlines subjects commonly discussed in an RFP. The town/city will then review the proposals, and select a firm they are most comfortable with. Towns and cities should look for firms with strong client history, reasonable budgets, and a deliverable schedule that meets the town/cities' requirements.

3. Going Through the Phases

Any design firm submitting a proposal will likely respond with an outline of how they intend to complete the project. The more detail in their proposal the better, but each proposal should outline the design phases, how many hours in each phase, and at least a rough schedule to illustrate how they intend to structure the project. Phases vary from firm to firm, but Selbert Perkins phase structure for a branding project looks like this:

1. Research & Discovery – This phase will likely be one of the longest, but is the most important. Setting the stage with the right information, stakeholders, project team, communication standards and any recent reports or master plans gives the design firm a solid foundation to build on. Towns/cities that would like a more public process will need more time/budget in this phase to accommodate.

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2. Concept Direction – After the research is pulled in and digested, the design firm will share a very basic idea of the potential directions their first phase has pointed them towards, and ask for validation. Feedback is very important in the early phases of this process, so don't hold back any comments the team is feeling.

3. Visual Language – The design team then develops the accessories to the new logo. Color, image style, copy tone/voice are all the details that help make a brand succeed, and by nailing them down prior to the logo. The brand should start to have a feeling that is familiar or in line with the town/city goals.

4. Logo Design & Refinement – This phase takes all the details and starts to put an identity to your town/city. The firm should present a set number of options reflected in their proposal. The brand concept that has the most potential should be selected for refinement.

5. User Testing & Refinement – This phase of refinement should be based in sharing the concept with stakeholders and asking for commentary, of which will be reviewed for integrity/relevance. The design team will weigh the feedback and revise the brand concept accordingly and share another presentation of their findings.

LRRP – Branding for Towns & Cities

6. Brand Guide Development – Once a final logo has been selected from the refinement phase, the design team should then begin preparing the brand guide. This document is organic and will develop over time, but should include standards for how and when the brand is used. This should be issued in PDF, but a printed version is also recommended for the staff to use as a guide while the brand is starting to be used in communications.

   A brand guide will vary in length, but should show at the least:

   - Logo in color
   - Logo in black & white/ high contrast
   - Any variations in format
   - Clear space to be maintained around the logo
   - Colors in detail – codes, hex values or pantones to be accurately reproduced
   - Applications of the logo being used appropriately
   - Do Not – representations of incorrect logo use to avoid
   - Index of files – a list of files of the logo in its different iterations and colors

After completion of the brand guide, the design firm will still be a valuable contact your team will want to be in touch with. New use cases will sometimes demand new logo types, your team may additional resources (letterhead, digital seal, signage & wayfinding) that the design firm will continue to develop. Our advice is to pick a creative design firm you feel comfortable with, that delivers professional presentation and can hold their schedule.

LRRP – Branding for Towns & Cities

Our Recommendations for the Town of Brockton

On 8/05/21, Cory DePasquale & Sheri Bates of Selbert Perkins Design met with a group of representatives from the town of Brockton & their LRRP partner BSC Group to discuss a revitalized brand for the town. During our discussion, a few points were made that our team would like elaborate on.

- Selbert Perkins would recommend a audit to see how the town is representing itself visually now, and taking a look at the commonalities among the examples. We discussed the "City of Champions" tagline as being outdated, and believe it's time for the city to take on a new identity.

- Brockton's has a deep history and some iconic architecture- great examples of these elements are present in the town's new brand.

- The town of Brockton's community likely contains artists that could be approached in any branding effort containing art. This is encouraged, as Brockton's new identity should have elements that come from within and are sourced locally.

- When branding for municipalities, the team needs to be thinking about what makes Brockton special now, and how the new visual identity will look in 5-10 years. This is an average refresh cycle, but a strong research phase typically will provide a more authentic result that can stand the test of time.

- Leverage free survey tools in the process. Google, Microsoft & Surveymonkey all have free survey tools that the town can use for polls at every step of the process – and the data they produce protects a democratic process with the townspeople. We'd encourage these polls for efficiency in outreach to the townspeople. Try using a QR code put up in high traffic areas with encouraging messaging: "Help pick us rebrand Brockton!"

September 17th, 2021

Local Rapid Recovery Plan

Best Practices & Recommendations; Signage and Wayfinding

Town of Brockton

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

This guide has been developed by Selbert Perkins Design for use in completing Project Rubrics assigned by the Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP). The goal of the document is to elaborate on best practices, deliverables, & process in relation to any branding development under the DCHD's LRRP Program.

The Process of Developing Wayfinding & Signage

1. Gather Your Assets

When it comes to making an impact with wayfinding, understanding the current state of your town's wayfinding signage is the first step. When the term "wayfinding" is attached to signage, it means the messaging on the sign is directing the viewer towards a destination.

Any maps indicating where current wayfinding signage exists will be very useful, and a beneficial first step. If you don't have this, and audit will likely be required.

Master planning documents that outline goals for the town/city are useful as well, as they will likely be referenced regarding planning around future goals and projects.

While a street sign could be considered wayfinding, the important distinction for this exercise should focus on sign types that include more information about destinations.

Gathering a master list of Points of Interest, or POI is also a good decision. Once the list feels comprehensive for your town, a good idea to categorize or sort this list into groups based on popularity of the given POI as a destination. This should give the wayfinding team a clear idea of goals for the wayfinding program.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

2. Layer the Data

Once the team has any maps, master plans, POI's and traffic maps, the goal should be to layer these sets of information over each other.

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The data will begin to form a clear picture of how the wayfinding system should address the topography of your city/town. The team should be able to see major routes for vehicles & pedestrians, POI's, town limits, parking & points of entry and exit. Based on all this information, the wayfinding team can make an educated assessment on where signage can be placed to help specific users find their way through the city/town. Keep in mind that wayfinding users will have different objectives; visitors will have different destinations from residents.

Beyond this, the team should add locations that are instrumental in helping people navigate the environment in an ideal way. Selbert Perkins calls these decision points – they represent a point on a journey that can influence the user to take a more beneficial or easier route.

The resulting maps should outline locations that are likely underutilized for signage and wayfinding.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

3. Identify the Sign Types

When it comes to identifying the signage elements, the first step will be looking at the needs of your wayfinding from a mapping perspective and assessing how those needs can be met with physical signs. Before picking visuals, really deliberate about the role of each sign in each instance.

Wayfinding information will be perceived differently based on context, as users driving have substantially less time to read signs than pedestrians.

Typically, the result of this exercise will lead to a set of signs that each have different roles. Selbert Perkins refers to this as a signage family. These are often shown at scale on a single page and compared to ensure each sign has a specific duty and avoids being redundant to users.

The most common sign would be a directory sign, which is designed for pedestrians. This is placed in high pedestrian traffic situations, normally where most traffic originates. Typically, a map is shown outlining all points of interest in within a certain walking distance. A best practice is to indicate the amount of time it would take to walk to each destination, either in time or distance.

Also commonly seen in wayfinding packages, a vehicular directional sign includes large text, and is meant to indicate direction for top tier destinations. This information is meant to influence wayfinding users that are driving vehicles, so text should read large. These signs should also be placed **before** users have to make turns in their journey – they should have enough time to interpret the signage, make decisions and have time to correct their course before an intersection.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

4. Designing the Signage

Once the sign types have been identified, the visual design can be applied to the signage family. It's important to let the objectives of each sign type to lead in this phase, and not let visuals dictate the overall design. Here, form follows function.

Vehicular and bike signage should be large to allow for large type. All signage should be high contrast and use fonts that are highly legible. In some instances, signs are seen for less than five seconds, and have information on them that will be crucial, like indicating direction to a hospital.

Pedestrian signage can be smaller in size but should be more targeted. Vehicular signage is still relevant to people on foot, and a good directional sign in the proper location will be relevant to all users and can save the town/city money as a more efficient use of budget in the wayfinding package.

5. Fabrication Partners

When the wayfinding package has it's locations and signs identified, a fabrication partner can be approached to help bring the project into reality.

Their first step should be coordinating base pricing to establish overall project costs, including installation. This allows the wayfinding design team to make changes in the wayfinding plan to save costs where they can and allow the fabrication team to pursue any discounts based on volume pricing.

A good fabrication team will be an invaluable partner. They can work with the city for any permitting, identify production methods that yield better pricing, and can complete a certain amount of design work. Always bid out to more than one fabricator to ensure even and fair pricing.

LRRP – Signage & Wayfinding for Towns & Cities

Our Recommendations for the Town of Brockton

On 8/05/21, Cory DePasquale & Sheri Bates of Selbert Perkins Design met with a group of representatives from the town of Brockton & their LRRP partner BSC Group to discuss signage & wayfinding for the town. During our discussion, a few points were made that our team would like to elaborate on.

- Having reviewed the wayfinding documentation provided to us by the Brockton city team, we recommend the completion of a city brand before continuing the design process with the signage. The signage team completed their analysis and preliminary design process and we believe their findings are valid, but if the design of the signs can include a refreshed brand, it will further the new image the city is trying to present.

- The Harriman wayfinding design submitted to the city - while highly informative - feels convoluted. Consider a peer review to make sure the system that is implemented isn't over top of what's necessary. Often, signage will continually be added to the program as new businesses appear, roadways change and the public calls for specific signage. Too much signage can be overly confusing for users.

- In terms of the developing downtown area, think about how pedestrians will navigate these areas. Where is the local parking to the most common destinations? How will we direct pedestrians from train stations to these destinations?

- Think about how to direct visitors to parking before they arrive in your downtown area. With most traffic coming from Rt.24, how can informative signs get visitors to parking lots before they arrive?

- Brockton has a lot of history, and we encourage the approach taken by the Harriman team in their signage package to incorporate this into the package. Informative/ History signs help add depth to a pedestrian journey, and these educational moments are ones that spark joy. Some grant programs even specifically fund for these types of signage, so be on the lookout.

MAPC
METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

City of Brockton - Increase City Planning Staff Capacity to Perform Planning and Redevelopment Functions

To: Jeanette Roach Tozer, AICP, Senior Planner, Brockton Plan Facilitator
From: Ralph Willmer, FAICP, Principal Planner, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Date: September 24, 2021

Introduction

The City of Brockton's Planning Department is currently comprised of three full-time planners, the Director of Planning and Economic Development, Senior Planner/Conservation Agent, and Administrative Assistant. Additionally, the City is seeking to fill two additional slots (Assistant Planner and a Senior Economic Development Planner). MAPC reviewed the staffing levels of planning departments in Massachusetts in 2018.

As shown in the summary below, comparable small MA cities have significantly larger planning departments when compared to Brockton, ranging from 14 – 30 staff positions versus four (one of which is an administrative assistant) in Brockton. As a result, the functions of those planning departments are much broader than what Brockton can achieve with the four positions. For a city of more than 100,000, Brockton's planning department is understaffed.

City	Department Title	Functions	Staffing Levels
Lawrence	Office of Planning, Zoning & Development	Land use, community development, historic preservation, open space, business and economic development	22
New Bedford	Planning, Housing & Community Development	Land use, housing, community development, preservation	19 (7 in planning)
Newton	Planning & Development	Land use, housing, economic development, community development, preservation, environment	30
Quincy	Planning & Community Development	Housing, relocation, urban renewal, rehabilitation, community development	19

Lowell	Planning & Development	Community development, development services (inspectional/permitting), economic development, housing and energy, traffic and transportation and planning projects, lead abatement	25
Salem	Planning & Community Development	Economic development, land use, housing policy, transportation projects, historic preservation, open space conservation programs, and neighborhood improvement efforts	14
Brockton	Planning & Economic Development	Zoning, fair housing, conservation, land use, transportation, open space planning	4

Source: MAPC, 2018

Job Descriptions

The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) has researched job descriptions nationally. Not all organizations dedicated to planning issues will offer employment at all levels. These summaries give relevant background information on a classification. Typical functions, knowledge, skills and qualifications will vary depending on the hiring organization.[1]AICP posts sample job descriptions for a variety of planning positions that can serve as a guide for a consistent approach for posting available positions (see https://www.planning.org/jobdescriptions/). The sample job descriptions listed include:

- Planning Director / Executive Director / Director / Owner / CEO / President
- Principal Planner / Planning Manager / Planner IV
- Planner III / Senior Planner
- Planner II / Associate / Junior Planner
- Planner I / Assistant Planner
- Planning Technician
- Planning Intern

Recruitment for available positions will be more successful if there is a standard format for job descriptions, especially if multiple job postings are made available concurrently.

It is noted that for some positions, Brockton imposes a residency requirement. While it is understood that such a policy has its pros and cons, the City may want to consider whether such a requirement limits the pool of potential applicants.

[1] American Planning Association, https://www.planning.org/jobdescriptions/

Budget and Funding Options

High Budget – (over $200,000) There may be some short-term budget savings if the City can cover some salary through sources such as ARPA. Other examples are noted below.

Typically, most planning department staff salaries are funded through the municipal general fund. That said, there are a few alternatives, as described in some of the examples below, that can provide some funding for specific functions or positions within the department.

City of Lynn

Before 2019, Lynn did not have a planning department. Rather, planning functions were scattered throughout line agencies of the city government and quasi-public agencies such as the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation of Lynn (EDIC). When creating the new Planning Department in 2020, the City first hired a Principal Planning Director, and then an Assistant Planning Director, and most recently an Arts and Culture Planner. In addition to funding from the general fund, the planning positions were funded in part by EDIC, at least for a limited amount of time.

Town of Arlington

Planning salaries are primarily funded by the Town's general fund. The Town has one full-time salaried staff administrator paid through the Community Development Block Grant (CBBG) program. Three planners are paid in part by CDBG: the Economic Development Coordinator, the Assistant Director, and the Environmental Planner. The Environmental Planner is also paid in part from a filing fees account tied to conservation. The Energy Manager is paid for in part by the public school budget. The administrative assistant is paid for in part by filing fees and the urban renewal revolving fund.

City of Somerville

Most positions are funded through the City's general fund. A few members of the housing and economic development teams are funded by CDBG administrative allocations and, when appropriate, HOME administrative funds. Some planning staff salaries have a small percentage of salary paid through CDBG to reflect the portion of their work done on block-grant related tasks. The Community Preservation Act Manager is funded from CPA administrative funds, and one of the transportation planners is funded with the transportation network company fees received from Uber/Lyft each year.

Town of Lexington

Related more specifically to the Recreation Department, salaries and all other expenses are covered by registration and user fees paid by residents for participation in various recreation programs.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

The Interim Final Rule (IFR) for ARPA includes several provisions that appear to allow for the use of such funds to cover the cost of municipal staff, but only for the period of time ending on December 31, 2024. Section 35(6)(b) of the Act addresses the impacts of the pandemic to local governments and the related rehiring of staff. The IFR refers to reductions in staffing that undermine the ability to deliver services effectively[2]. Thus, the IFR includes as an eligible use payroll, covered benefits, and other costs associated with rehiring public sector staff, up to the pre-pandemic staffing level of the government[3]. Sections 602(c)(1)(C) and 603(c)(1)(C) of the Act allow recipients facing budget shortfalls to use payments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds to avoid cuts to government services and, thus, enable local governments to continue to provide valuable services and ensure that fiscal austerity measures do not hamper the broader economic recovery[4].

Timeframe

Short-term (under five years). ARPA funding only an option through December 31, 2024.

Risks

Medium – expansion of the City's planning staff requires significant commitments of funding over the long-term, which can only be achieved through strong political support. Given that Brockton's planning functions are already understaffed (especially when compared with comparable cities in Massachusetts), the City will continue to face an uphill challenge in its economic recovery efforts without adequate resources and staff capacity.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of new staff members added to Planning Department
- Expanded staff capacity and areas of functional expertise
- Efficiency in processing permit applications

[2] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-10283/p-130
[3] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-10283/p-163
[4] https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-10283/p-247